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VISIONARIES

Knights of the Magical Light

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BY
DEMON
DESTROYED!

THE STAR STONE

BEHIND HIM, HARKON HEARS THE CACKLE OF CRUEL LAUGHTER, THE SIZZLE OF MAGICALLY-POWERED LASERS, AND THE RUMBLE OF HEAVY METAL OVER CRUMBLING STONE.

HE HAS NO TIME TO APPRECIATE THE IRONY OF HIS POSITION: HE BUILT THESE VEHICLES THAT NOW HUNT HIM LIKE SOME FRIGHTENED ANIMAL ACROSS THE RUINED LANDSCAPE OF THE WORLD CALLED PRYSMOS.

HARKON HAS NO TIME FOR IRONIES: HIS TIME IS RUNNING OUT.

HE FLEES, PRAYING FOR A FEW SECONDS MORE, KNOWING EACH INSTANT MIGHT WELL BE HIS LAST...

ZTHOOOM!!

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YOU DO GOOD WORK, ENGINEER HARKON! THIS VEHICLE YOU CREATED LIVES UP TO ITS NAME-- "DAGGER ASSAULT!"



THE DARKLING LORDS COULD USE MORE SUCH WEAPONS AS WE PREPARE FOR OUR INEVITABLE CONFRONTATION WITH LEORIC'S SPECTRAL KNIGHTS.

PITY YOU DECIDED TO LEAVE OUR EMPLOY.



AT LEAST YOUR USEFULNESS IS NOT COMPLETELY AT AN END.

MOONS OF PRYSMOS....!



"YOU MAKE AN EXCELLENT TARGET FOR WEAPONS PRACTICE!"

SKROOOM!

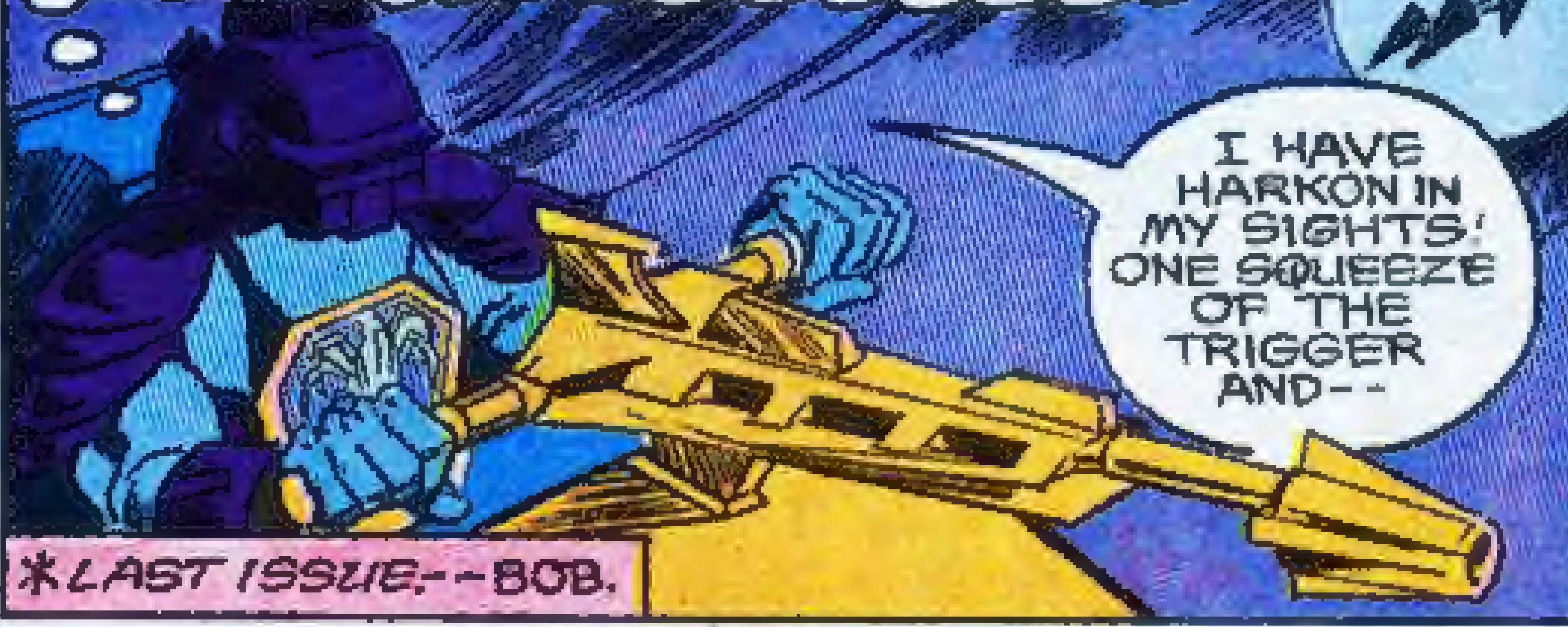


LEAVE SOME FOR ME, REEKON!

REMEMBER, DARKSTORM SENT US BOTH TO CAPTURE THE ENGINEER. I DEMAND MY RIGHTFUL SHARE OF THE HUNTSMAN'S TROPHY!

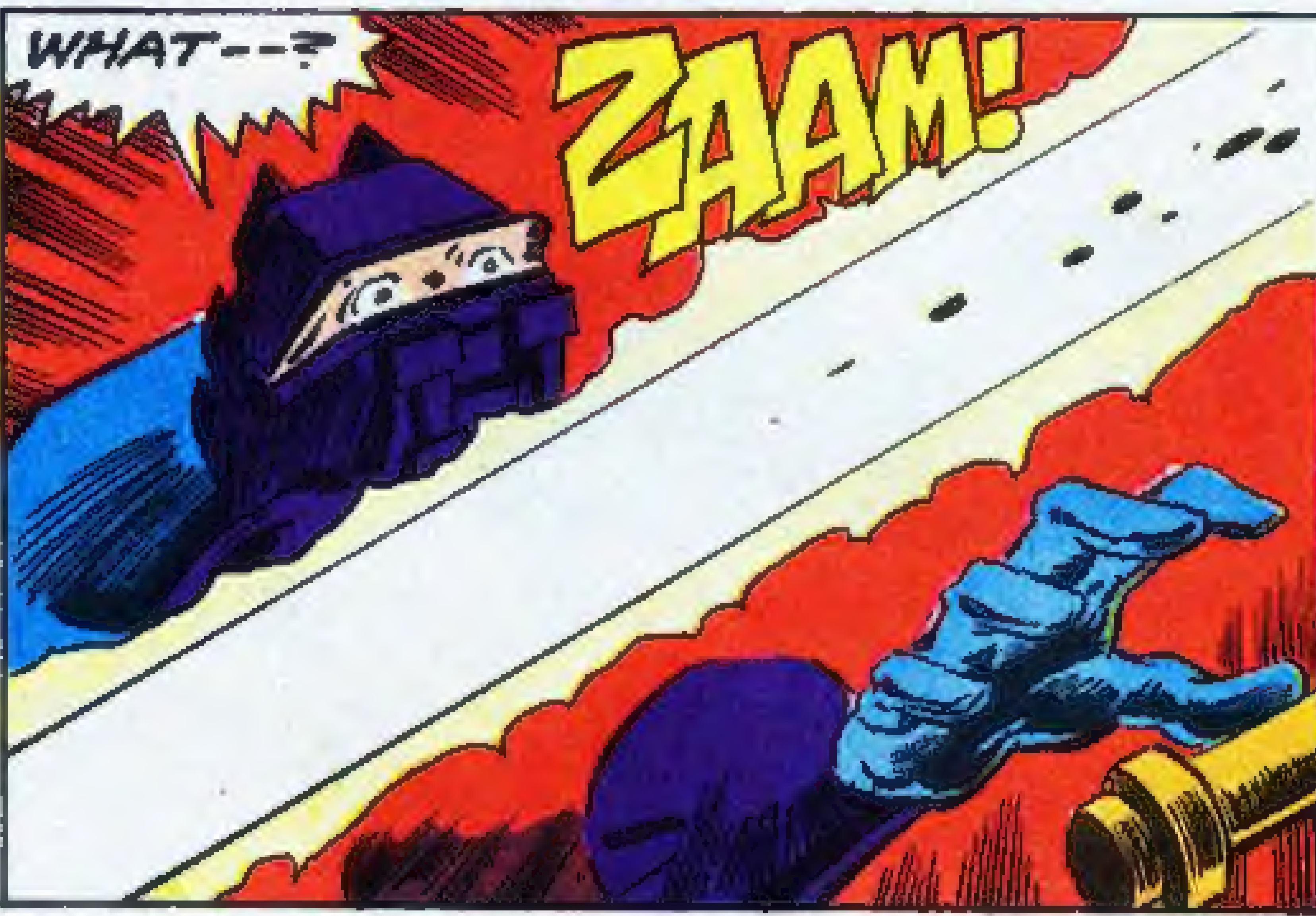
AND HOW I NEED IT!

DARKSTORM STILL HASN'T FORGIVEN ME FOR LOSING THE SKY CLAW TO THE SPECTRAL KNIGHTS TWO MONTHS AGO. * THIS IS MY CHANCE TO SHOW HIM I CAN BE TRUSTED.



I HAVE HARKON IN MY SIGHTS! ONE SQUEEZE OF THE TRIGGER AND--

* LAST ISSUE--BOB.



WHAT---

ZAAM!

THE SKY CLAW!
AND PILOTING
IT--ARZON!

YOU'VE
WANDERED A
LITTLE FAR
AFIELD,
HAVEN'T YOU,
MORTDRED?

THIS TERRITORY
IS UNDER SPECTRAL
KNIGHT PROTECTION.

I DON'T NEED
MY STAFF OF
KNOWLEDGE
TO KNOW THAT
MAKES YOU A
TRESPASSER.

WE HAVE A
SPECIAL
TREATMENT
FOR
TRESPASSERS,
DARKLING
LORD.

ENJOY!

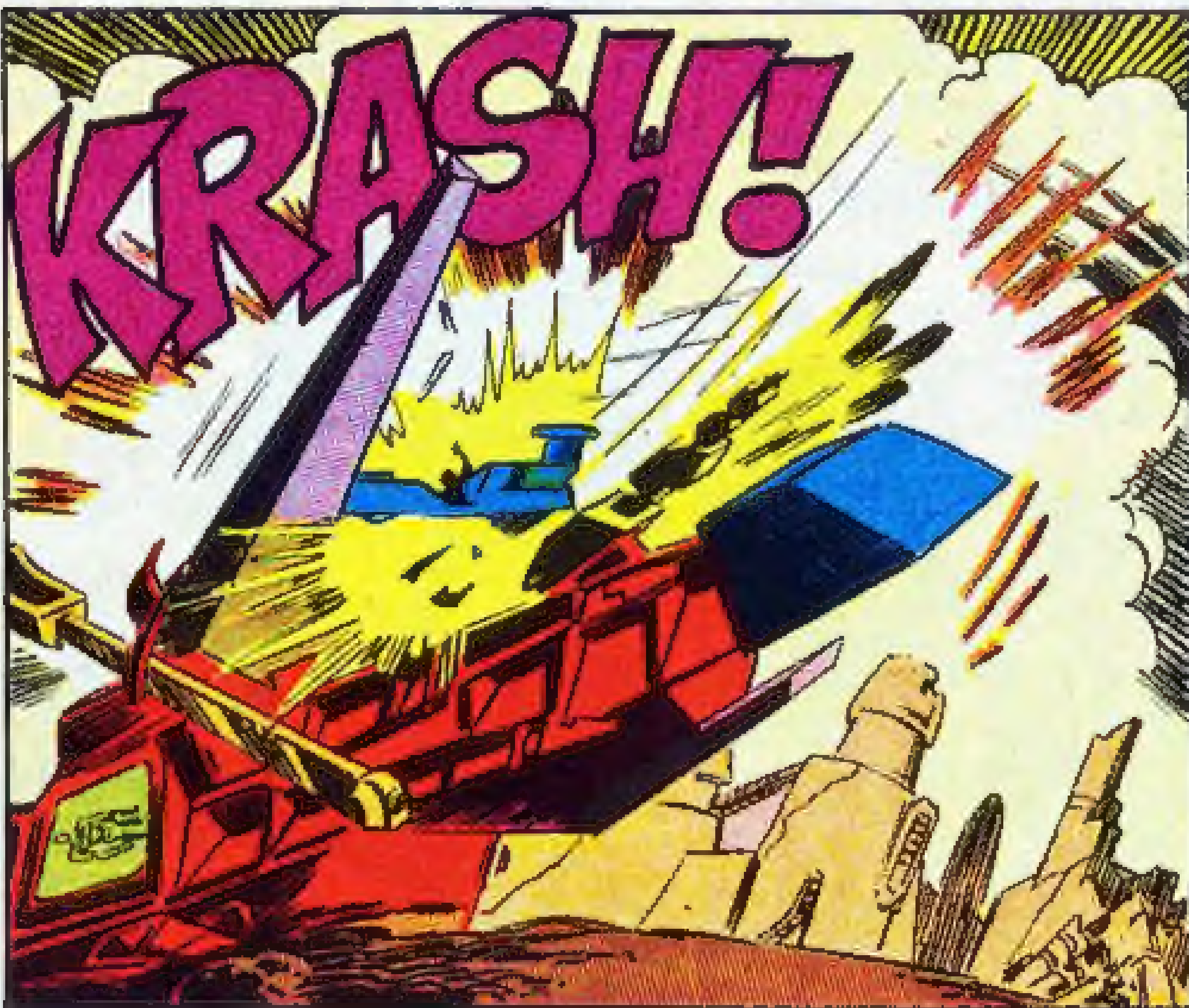
SHWOOSH!

YAAAHN!
BACKWASH
HITTING MY
CRAFT--

--I'M
LOSING
CONTROL

MORTDRED, YOU
BEARDED IDIOT!
PULL UP!

PULL
UP
BEFORE
YOU--



...UNGH... MORTDRED...
WHERE ARE YOU?
DON'T TRY TO HIDE
FROM--AH.

I SHOULD HAVE
GUESSED YOU'D
TAKE REFUGE IN
THE SHAPE OF
YOUR MYSTICAL
PERSONALITY.

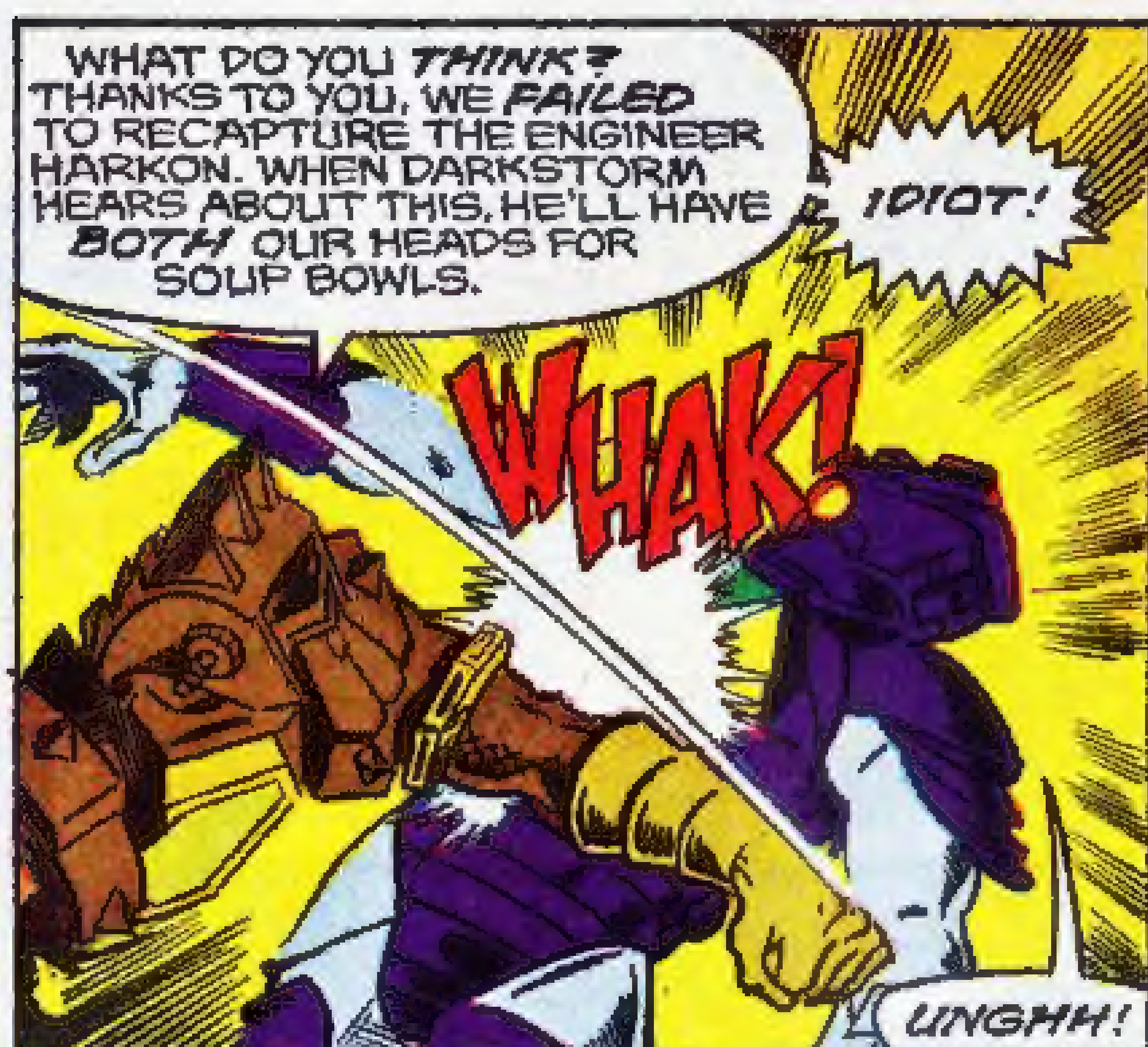
THE SCAMPERING
BEETLE SO
SUITS YOU.



WELL, ARE YOU GOING TO FACE ME LIKE A MAN--- OR DO I SQUASH YOU LIKE A BUG?

REEKON, PLEASE--- WHAT HAPPENED WAS AN ACCIDENT. ARZON CONFUSED ME...

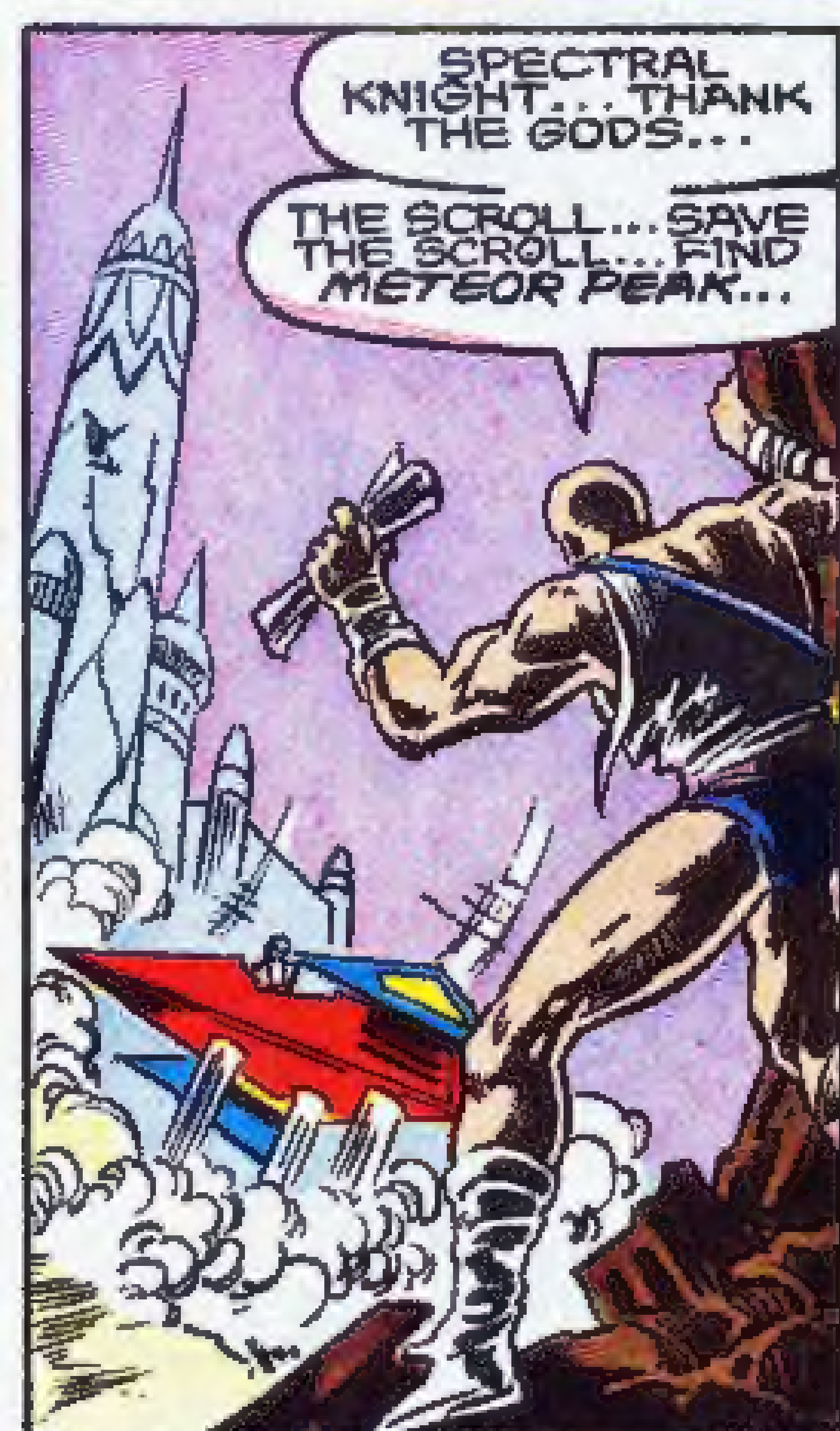
W-WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO?



WHAT DO YOU *THINK*? THANKS TO YOU, WE *FAILED* TO RECAPTURE THE ENGINEER HARKON. WHEN DARKSTORM HEARS ABOUT THIS, HE'LL HAVE BOTH OUR HEADS FOR SOUP BOWLS.

IDIOT!

UNGHH!



SPECTRAL KNIGHT... THANK THE GODS...

THE SCROLL... SAVE THE SCROLL... FIND METEOR PEAK...



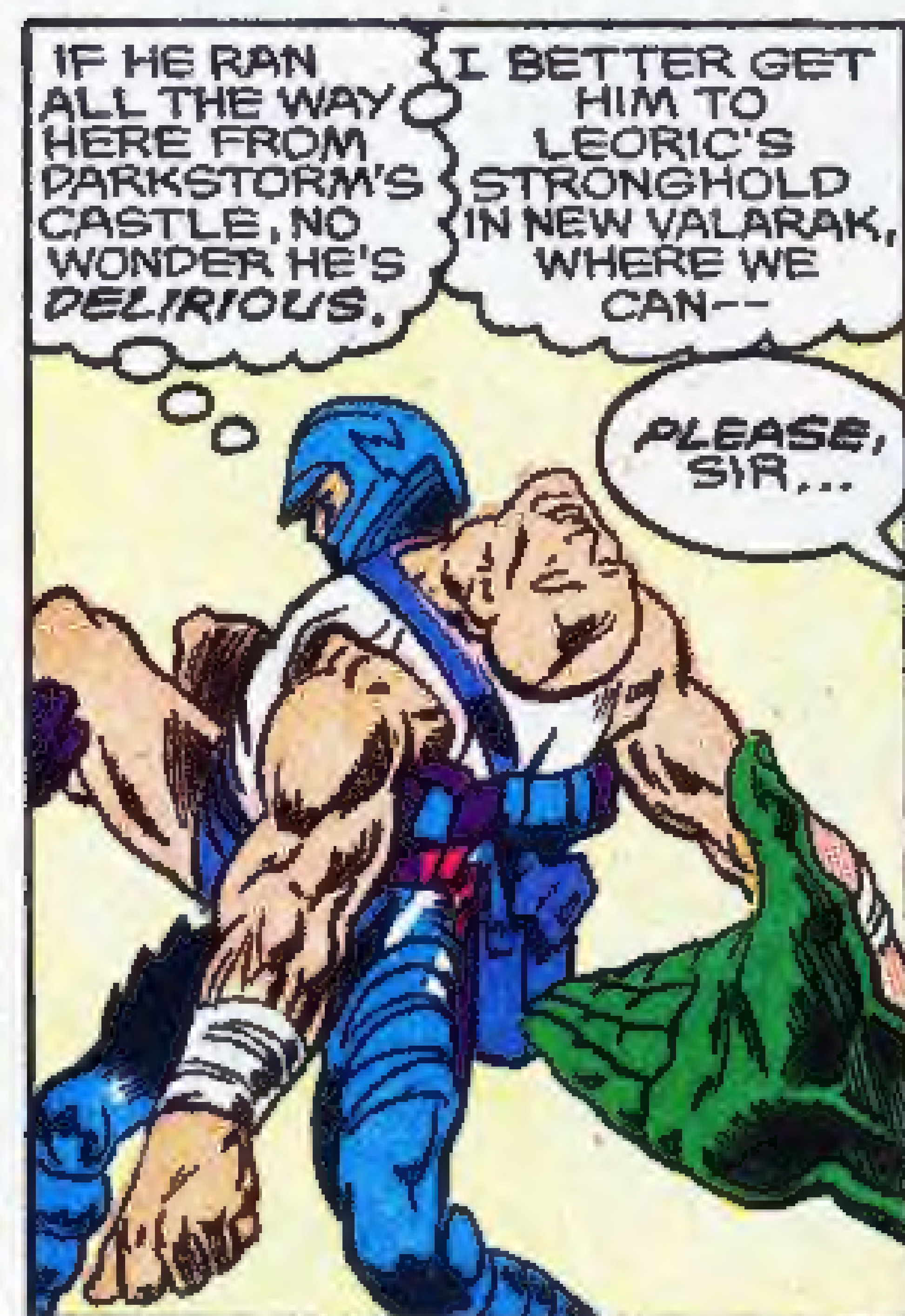
RELAX, FRIEND. THOSE DARKLING LORDS CAN'T HARM YOU NOW. YOU'RE SAFE.

WRONG. NO ONE SAFE... I FOUND THE SCROLL IN... OLD LIBRARY...



THAT'S WHY I RAN... WARN THE KNIGHTS... SAVE THE WORLD... END THE AGE OF MAGIC... END...

...



IF HE RAN ALL THE WAY HERE FROM DARKSTORM'S CASTLE, NO WONDER HE'S DELIRIOUS.

I BETTER GET HIM TO LEORIC'S STRONGHOLD IN NEW VALARAK, WHERE WE CAN--

PLEASE, SIR...



YOU SEEM KIND. DO YOU HAVE ANY FOOD? OUR PARENTS LEFT US AFTER THE CHANGE... WE'RE ALL ALONE... AND SO HUNGRY, SIR...

HELP... PLEASE...?

I-I'M SORRY...



THERE'S NOTHING I CAN DO.

SO MANY CHILDREN IN NEED... SO MANY PEOPLE SUFFERING SINCE THE AGE OF SCIENCE ENDED. THERE'S NOTHING ANY OF US CAN DO BUT REBUILD CIVILIZATION AS BEST WE CAN.

AND EVEN KNOWING THAT, I FEEL SO HELPLESS...

SEVERAL HOURS LATER, AT DARKSTORM'S DARK DOMAIN, HOME OF THE DARKLING LORDS WHO HOLD HALF THE RUINED PLANET PRYSMOS IN THEIR IRON GRIP...

SO YOU LET THE ENGINEER HARKON ESCAPE, DID YOU?

MY, MY... WHAT A SURPRISE.

DARKSTORM, I CAN EXPLAIN--

SHUT UP, MORTDRED. I'VE NO PATIENCE FOR YOUR FEEBLE EXPLANATIONS. THERE'S ONLY ONE REASON I LET YOU LIVE.

WHEN HE GRANTED US CERTAIN POWERS, THE WIZARD MERKLYN SAW FIT TO GIVE YOU THE MYSTIC ABILITY TO PILOT SKY CLAW WITH MORE SKILL THAN ANY MAN ALIVE.

ONCE WE FINALLY RECOVER THAT VEHICLE, YOU'LL BE OF USE TO ME. ONLY THAT MAKES UP FOR THE LOSS OF THE ENGINEER.

UH, MASTER-- I HAVE A PLAN. IN MY MYSTIC PERSONALITY, PERHAPS I CAN SLIP INTO LEORIC'S CASTLE UNSEEN... MAKE MY WAY TO THE SKY CLAW...

LOVELIES FOR A LOVELY LADY, VIRULINA.

FLOWERS, LEXOR? HOW SWEET.

...AND STEAL IT BEFORE THE SPECTRAL KNIGHTS. KNOW I'M THERE.

I CAN DO IT, MASTER. GIVE ME THE CHANCE.

OF COURSE, I HATE FLOWERS.

HMM. I'LL GIVE YOU THAT CHANCE, MORTDRED-- YOU AND REEKON TOGETHER.

TOGETHER? BUT, MASTER--

I MUST PROTEST.

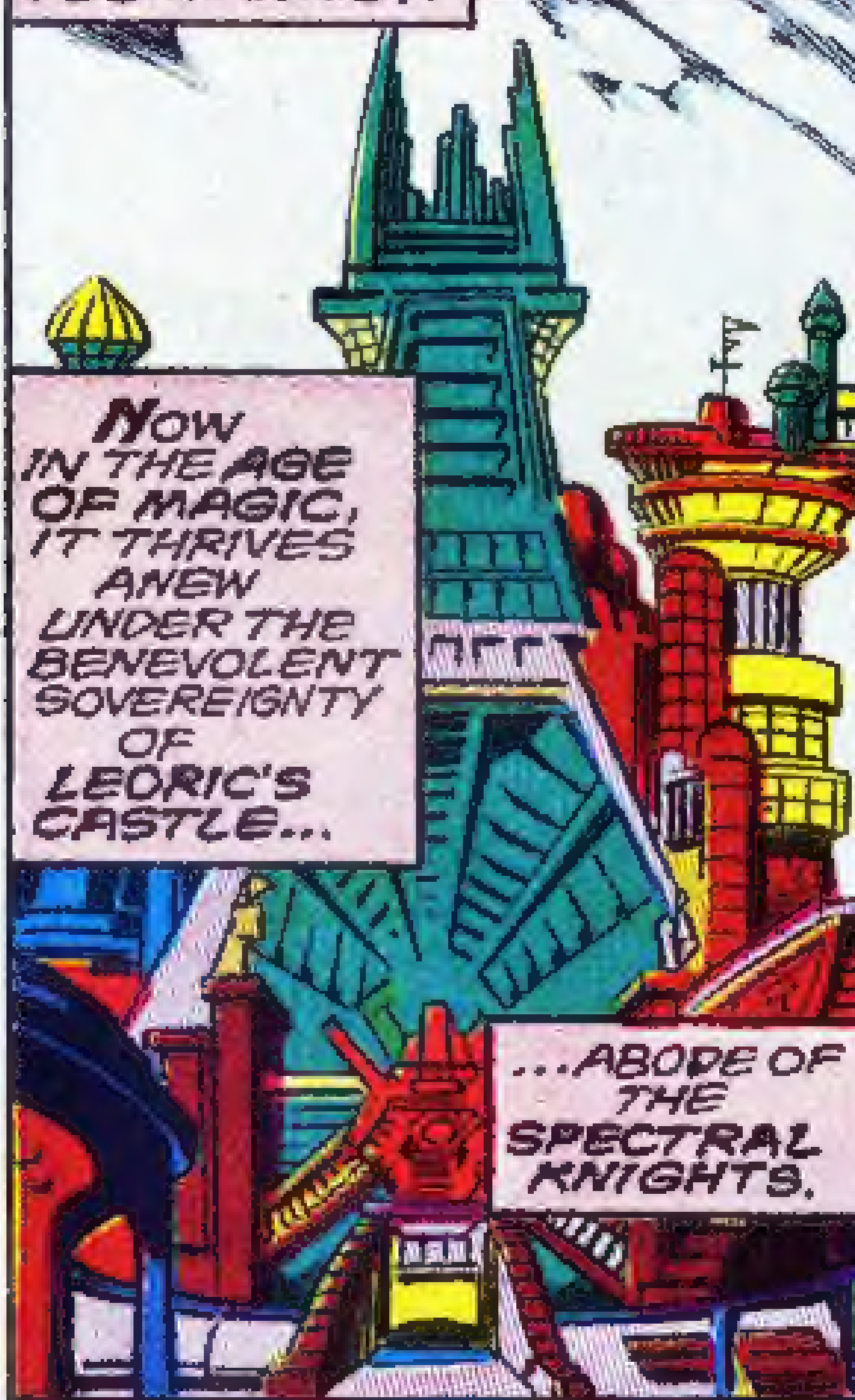
SILENCE. YOUR CONSTANT BICKERING ANNOYS ME.

THE TWO OF YOU LOST ENGINEER HARKON-- TOGETHER. THE TWO OF YOU WILL MAKE AMENDS FOR THAT FAILURE-- TOGETHER.

ANY FURTHER OBJECTIONS?

I DIDN'T THINK THERE WOULD BE...

NEW VALARAK: ONCE, IN THE DAYS WHEN SCIENCE REIGNED ON PRYSMOS, THIS CITY WAS A THRIVING CENTER OF TECHNOLOGY.



NOW IN THE AGE OF MAGIC, IT THRIVES ANEW UNDER THE BENEVOLENT SOVEREIGNTY OF LEORIC'S CASTLE...

...ABODE OF THE SPECTRAL KNIGHTS.

HOW IS OUR GUEST, CRYOTEK?

HAVE YOU AND GALADRIA TENDED HIS WOUNDS?

WE'VE DONE WHAT WE CAN, LEORIC. SLEEP WILL HEAL THE REST.

METEOR PEAK... THE END OF MAGIC...

HE KEEPS SAYING THE SAME THING, OVER AND OVER.



...END OF MAGIC... RETURN OF SCIENCE...

THE END OF MAGIC AND THE RETURN OF SCIENCE. WOULDN'T THAT BE GLORIOUS?

NO MORE PAIN, NO MORE SUFFERING...

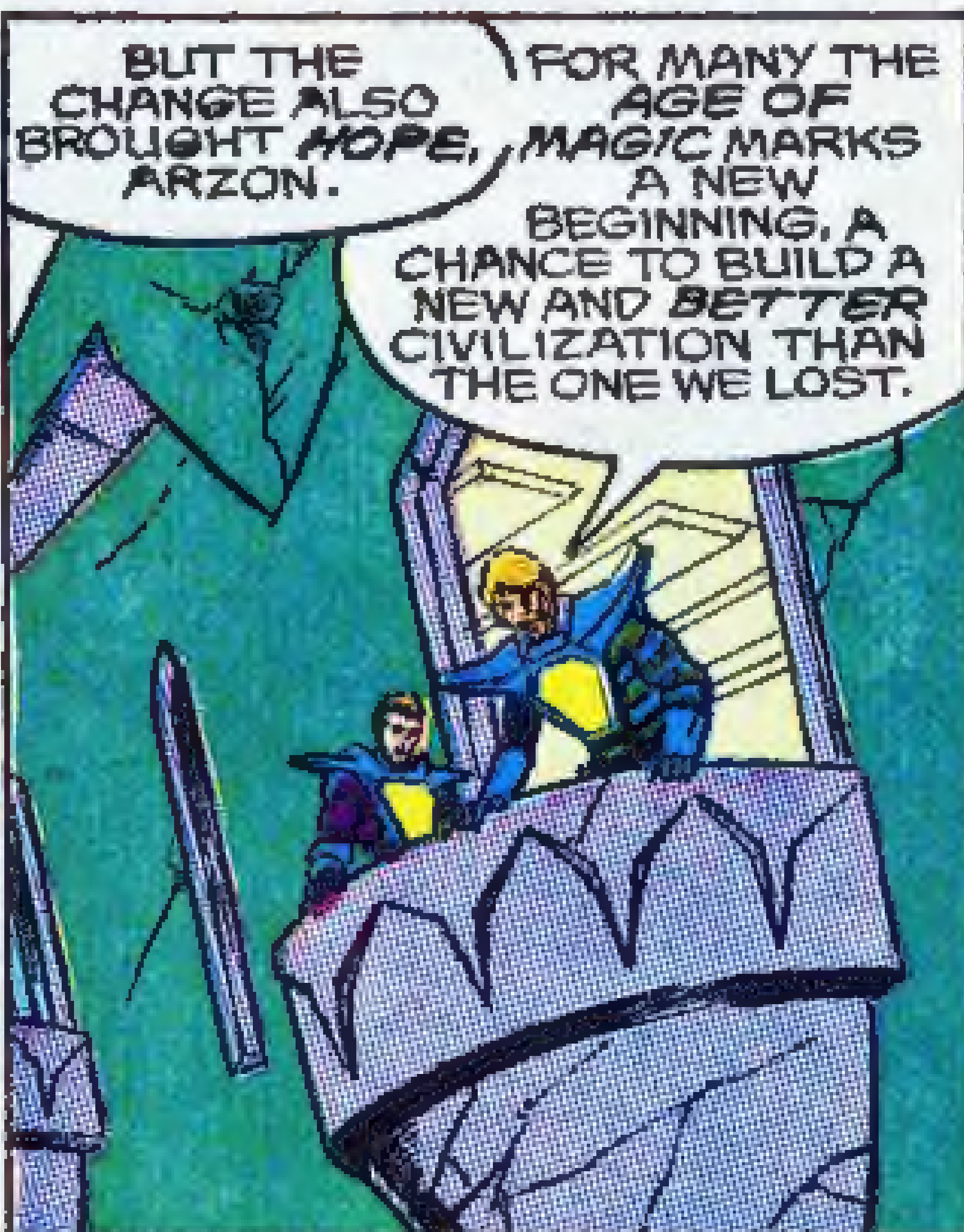
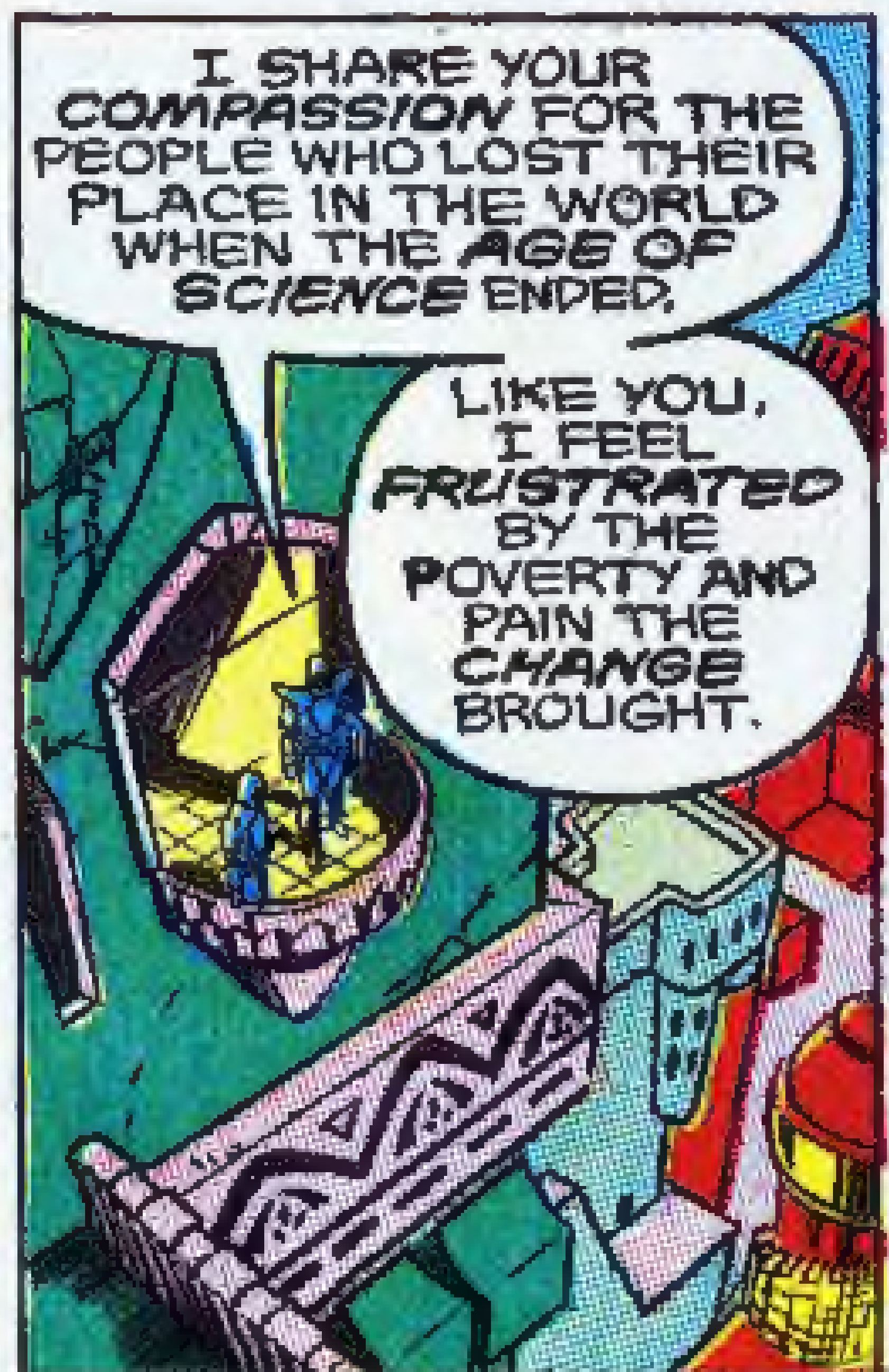
HMM? ARZON, PERHAPS WE BETTER TALK, COME WITH ME.

I SHARE YOUR COMPASSION FOR THE PEOPLE WHO LOST THEIR PLACE IN THE WORLD WHEN THE AGE OF SCIENCE ENDED.

LIKE YOU, I FEEL FRUSTRATED BY THE POVERTY AND PAIN THE CHANGE BROUGHT.

BUT THE CHANGE ALSO BROUGHT HOPE, ARZON.

FOR MANY THE AGE OF MAGIC MARKS A NEW BEGINNING, A CHANCE TO BUILD A NEW AND BETTER CIVILIZATION THAN THE ONE WE LOST.



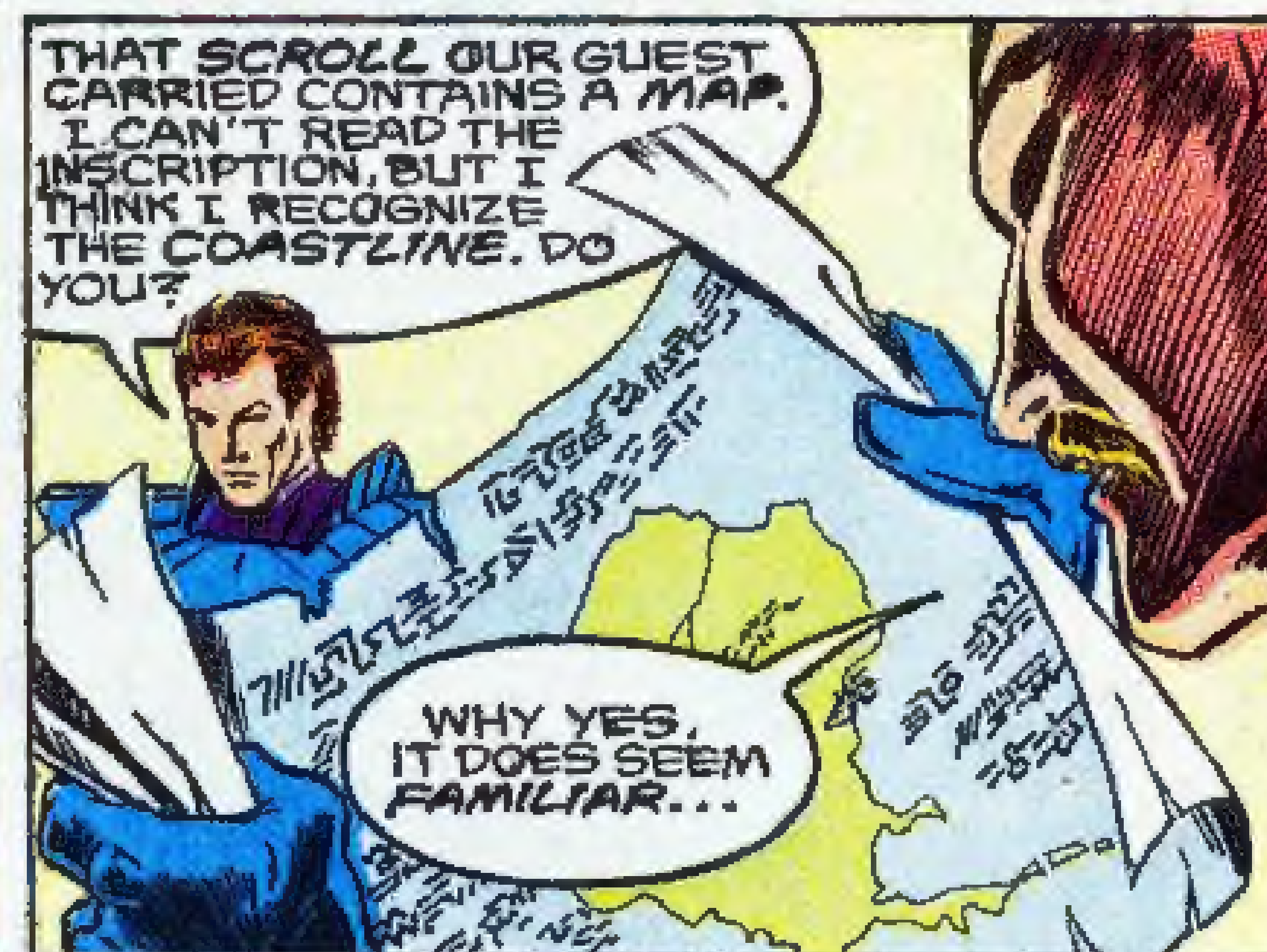
WE MUST CLING TO THAT HOPE, MY FRIEND... ACCEPT WHAT WE CANNOT CHANGE, AND CHANGE WHAT WE CAN.

BUT IF WE COULD CHANGE THE WORLD, LEORIC? IF WE COULD RETURN TO THE AGE OF SCIENCE...?

EH? WHAT ARE YOU SAYING?

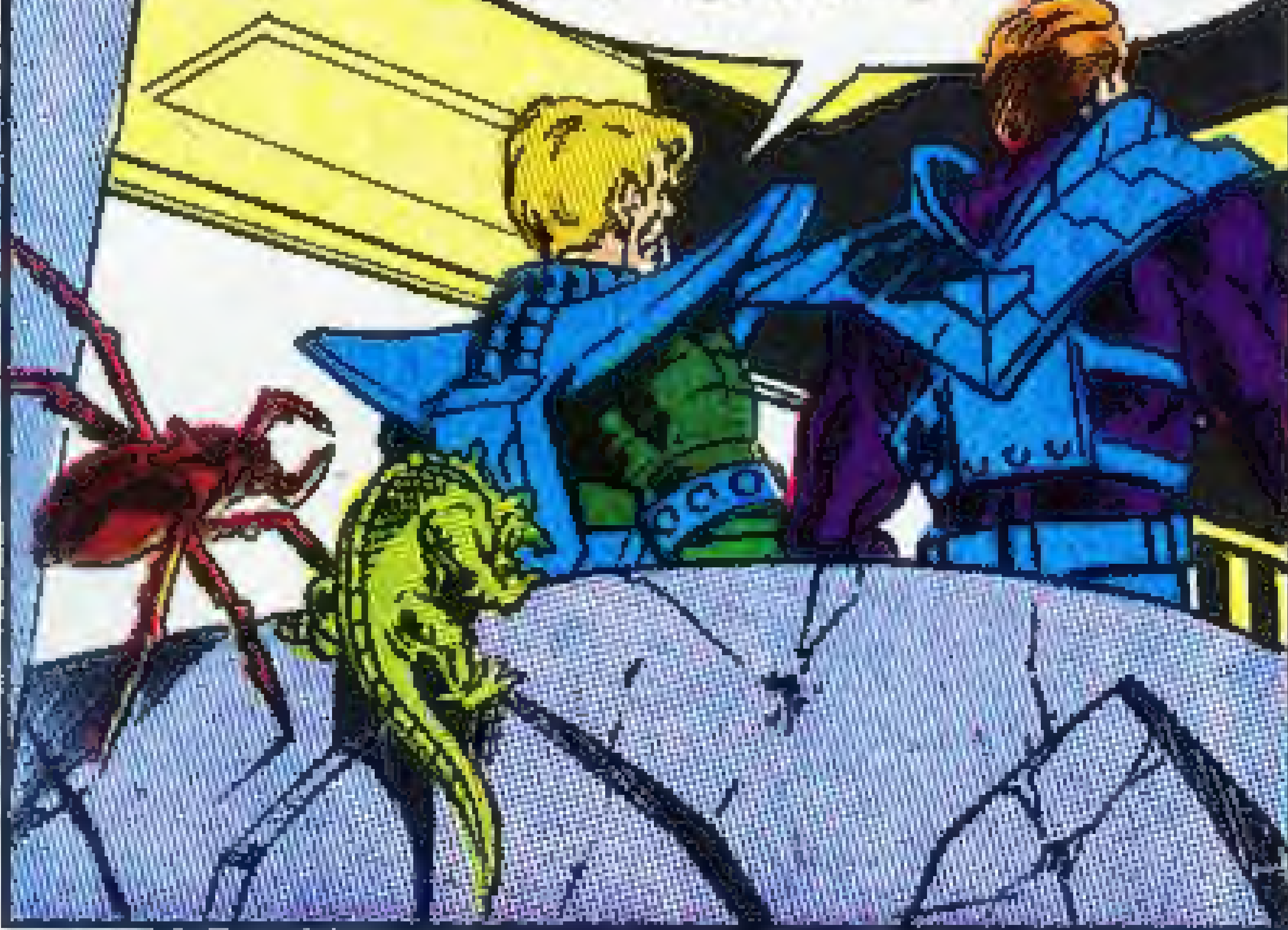
THAT SCROLL OUR GUEST CARRIED CONTAINS A MAP. I CAN'T READ THE INSCRIPTION, BUT I THINK I RECOGNIZE THE COASTLINE. DO YOU?

WHY YES, IT DOES SEEM FAMILIAR...



COME, WE'LL CHECK THE MASTER CARTOGRAPHS IN THE CASTLE MAP ROOM.

IF PROTECTING THIS SCROLL WAS IMPORTANT ENOUGH FOR THE ENGINEER TO RISK HIS LIFE, THE LEAST WE CAN DO IS TO ATTEMPT TO DISCOVER ITS MEANING.



DID YOU HEAR, MORTDRED?

BEFORE WE RECOVER THE SKY CLAW, I WANT TO KNOW THE NATURE OF THIS SECRET HARKON WAS TRYING TO PROTECT

BUT, REEKON, THE RISK--

OH, SHUT UP.



LEORIC, WHAT IF THIS SCROLL DOES CONTAIN A WAY TO END THE AGE OF MAGIC? WHAT SHOULD WE DO?

CROSS THAT PARTICULAR BRIDGE WHEN WE COME TO IT, THAT'S MY SUGGESTION.

AH, HERE'S THE MAP I WAS LOOKING FOR.



IT'S THE SAME COASTLINE...

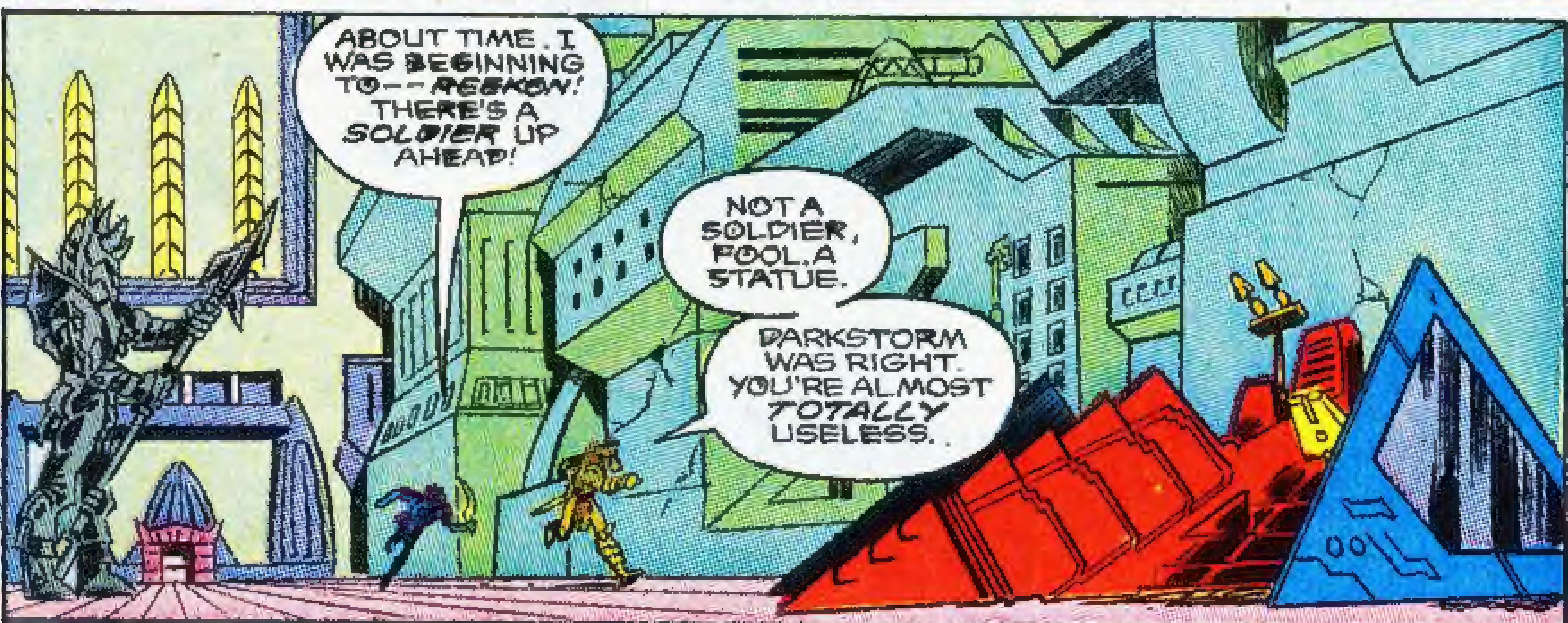
ONLY SEVENTY MILES NORTHEAST OF HERE, SIXTEEN MILES SOUTH OF GRAVESTONE BAY.

WHAT'S HIDDEN THERE, I WONDER?



I WONDER, TOO... AND SO WILL DARKSTORM.

LET'S GET OUT OF HERE, MORTDRED.



ABOUT TIME I WAS BEGINNING TO-- REEKON! THERE'S A SOLDIER UP AHEAD!

NOT A SOLDIER, FOOL. A STATUE.

DARKSTORM WAS RIGHT. YOU'RE ALMOST TOTALLY USELESS.

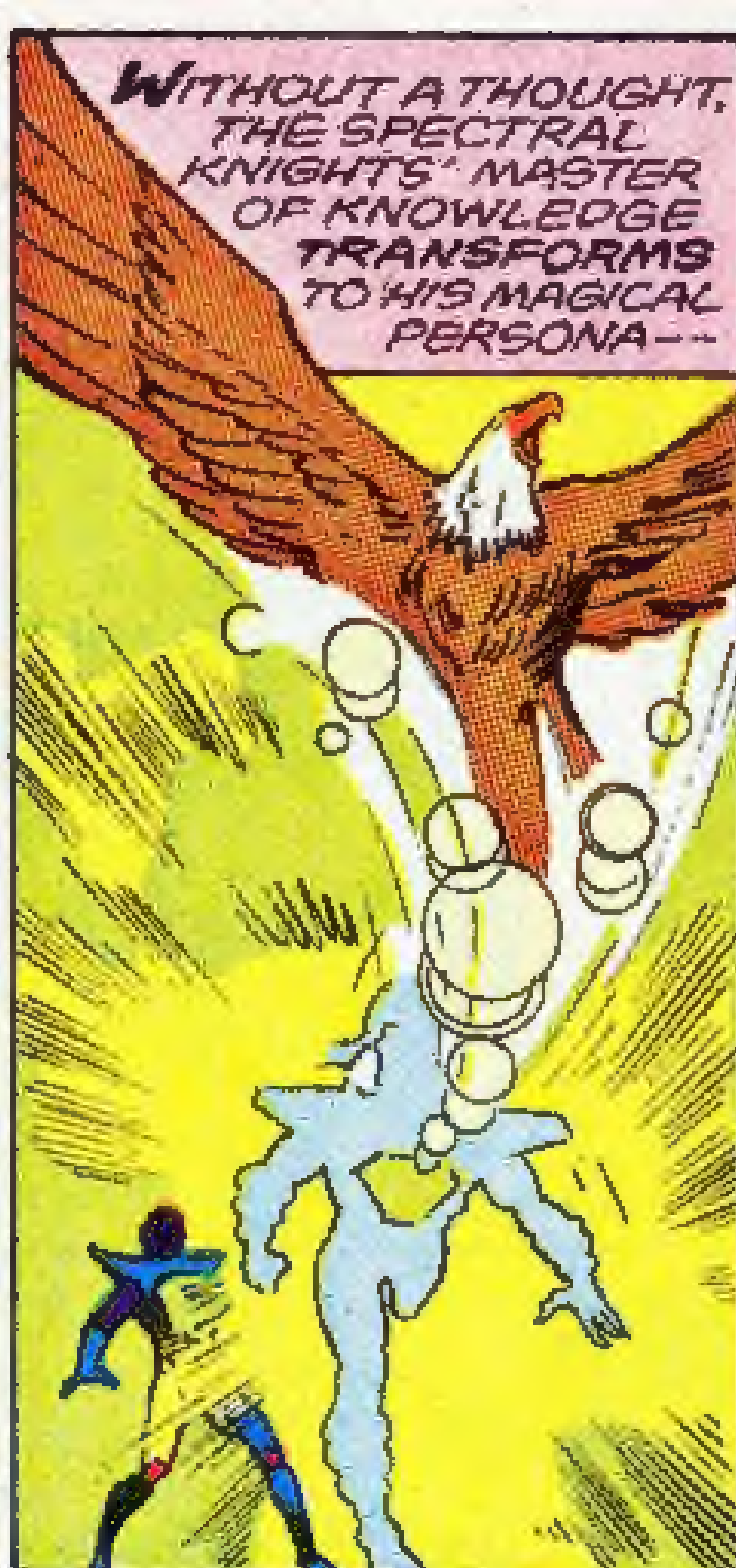


VRRRRM

WE SHOULD ORGANIZE AN EXPEDITION AT ONCE TO--EH?

LEORIC, THAT SOUND...

THE SKY CLAW!



WITHOUT A THOUGHT, THE SPECTRAL KNIGHTS' MASTER OF KNOWLEDGE TRANSFORMS TO HIS MAGICAL PERSONA--



--BURSTING INTO THE DUSKY TWILIGHT AIR WITH AN EAGLE'S SHARP CRY OF RAGE...

KEEEAAWW

KRASH!



MORTDRED AND REEKON--THEY'RE STEALING THE SKY CLAW!

HAVE TO STOP THEM, CATCH THEM--PUSH MYSELF HARDER, FASTER--!

UHH! GASP!

NO USE...



WHAT HAPPENED? WHERE'S THE SKY CLAW?

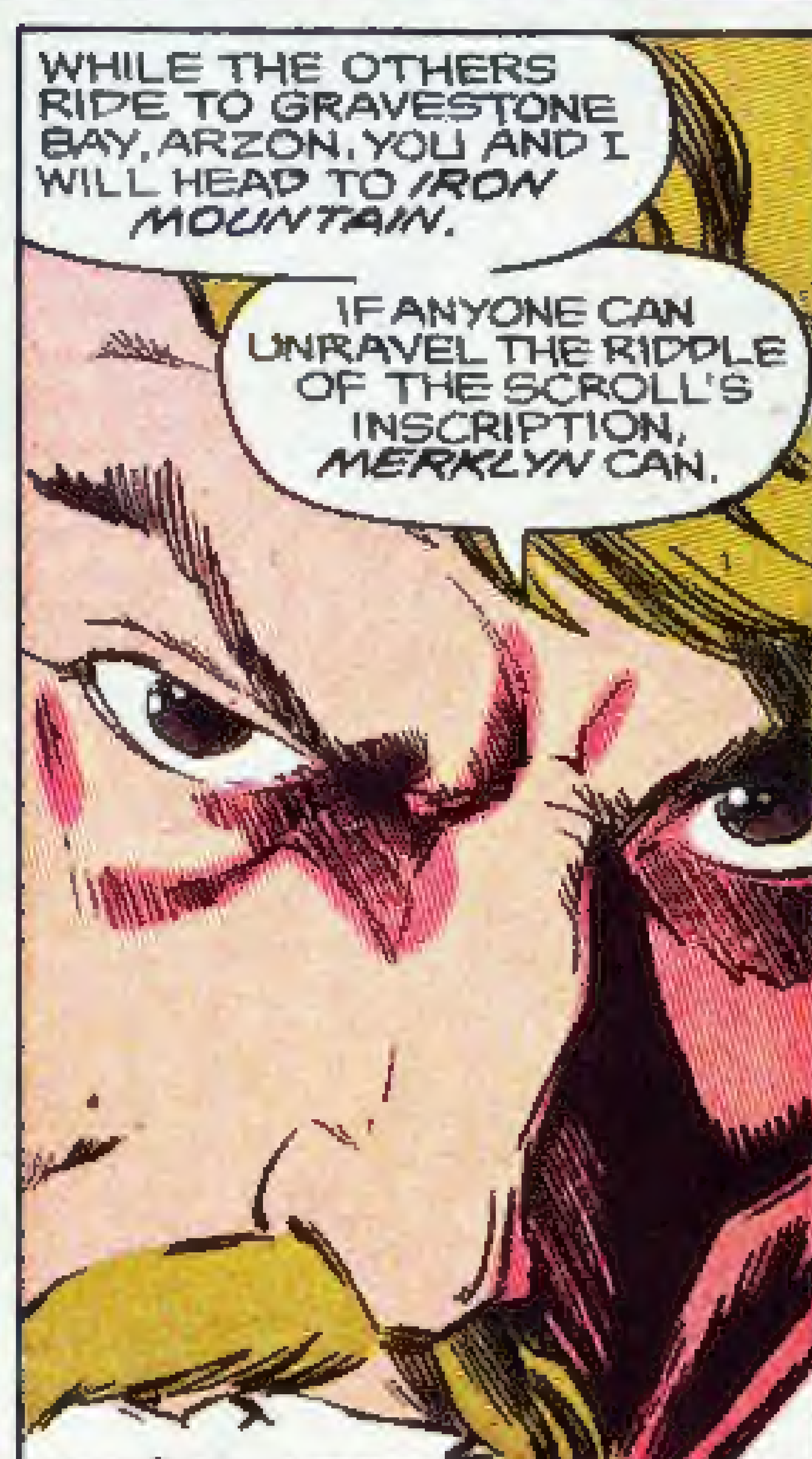
GONE, CRYOTEK-- AND IT'S MY FAULT. I COULDN'T FLY FAST OR HIGH ENOUGH!

NONSENSE, ARZON! YOU DID YOUR BEST.



THIS PUTS A NEW LIGHT ON THINGS, IF DARKSTORM'S AGENTS OVERHEARD OUR DISCUSSION, THEY MAY RUSH TO UNCOVER THE MEANING OF HARKON'S SECRET BEFORE WE DO.

THAT WE CANNOT ALLOW. SUMMON THE SPECTRAL KNIGHTS.



WHILE THE OTHERS RIDE TO GRAVESTONE BAY, ARZON, YOU AND I WILL HEAD TO IRON MOUNTAIN.

IF ANYONE CAN UNRAVEL THE RIDDLE OF THE SCROLL'S INSCRIPTION, MERKLYN CAN.

IRON MOUNTAIN:
LIKE SO MUCH ELSE OF
PRYSMOS, ONCE IT WAS
A MONUMENT TO HIGH
TECHNOLOGY.

**NOW IT IS A MONUMENT OF A
FAR DIFFERENT KIND, HOME
TO THE WIZARD KNOWN ONLY
AS MERKLYN, HE WHO GAVE
SPECTRAL KNIGHTS AND
DARKLING LORDS ALIKE THEIR
MYSTIC AND MYSTERIOUS
POWERS...**

WE COME TO
YOU SEEKING
ADVICE AND
INFORMATION.

BY THE STAFF
OF WISDOM
THAT YOU
GAVE ME, I
ASK YOUR
WILLING AID.

MERKLYN!
IT IS I,
LEORIC!

DEEP WITHIN THE
MOUNTAIN, STONES
RUMBLE, AND IN A
FLASH OF OCCULT
LIGHTNING--

--THE WIZARD
APPEARS...

BY WHAT
RIGHT DO
YOU DISTURB
MY STUDIES?

YES, YES-- I
KNOW. I'M A
WIZARD.
REMEMBER? I
KNOW ALL ABOUT
YOUR SCROLL,
AND I KNOW
WHAT IT
CONTAINS--

--AS WOULD
YOU, ARZON,
IF YOU SPOKE
THE SPELL OF
KNOWLEDGE I
IMPLANTED IN
YOUR MIND WHEN
I GAVE YOU
YOUR STAFF OF
POWER.

FOOL I WAS TO GIVE YOU
KNOWLEDGE AND NOT THE
BRAINS TO USE IT.

THE SPELL? OF
COURSE, THE SPELL...
I NEVER TRIED IT
BEFORE...

"A WHIM, A
THOUGHT, AND
MORE IS SOUGHT,
AWAKE, MY MIND,
THY WILL BE
WROUGHT!"

BY THE RIGHT
OF JUSTICE,
MERKLYN!

WE HAVE
A SCROLL--

LEORIC, IT'S
INCREDIBLE!
EVERY WORD OF
THE INSCRIPTION
IS CLEAR TO
ME NOW!

BUT NOT TO
ME, ARZON!
WHAT DOES
IT SAY?

"TEN THOUSAND YEARS
AGO," ARZON SAYS,
"DURING THE EARLY DAYS
OF THE AGE OF SCIENCE,
A GREAT METEOR CAME
TEARING OUT OF THE
NIGHT SKY..."

"...CRASHING NOT FAR
FROM THE CITY-STATE
THAT THEN OCCUPIED
THE AREA AROUND
GRAVESTONE BAY.

"ITS LANDING
FILLED THE NIGHT
WITH *THUNDER* FOR
HUNDREDS OF MILES
AROUND.

"NATURALLY, THE
MILITARY SCIENTISTS
OF THAT TIME HURRIED
TO INVESTIGATE..."

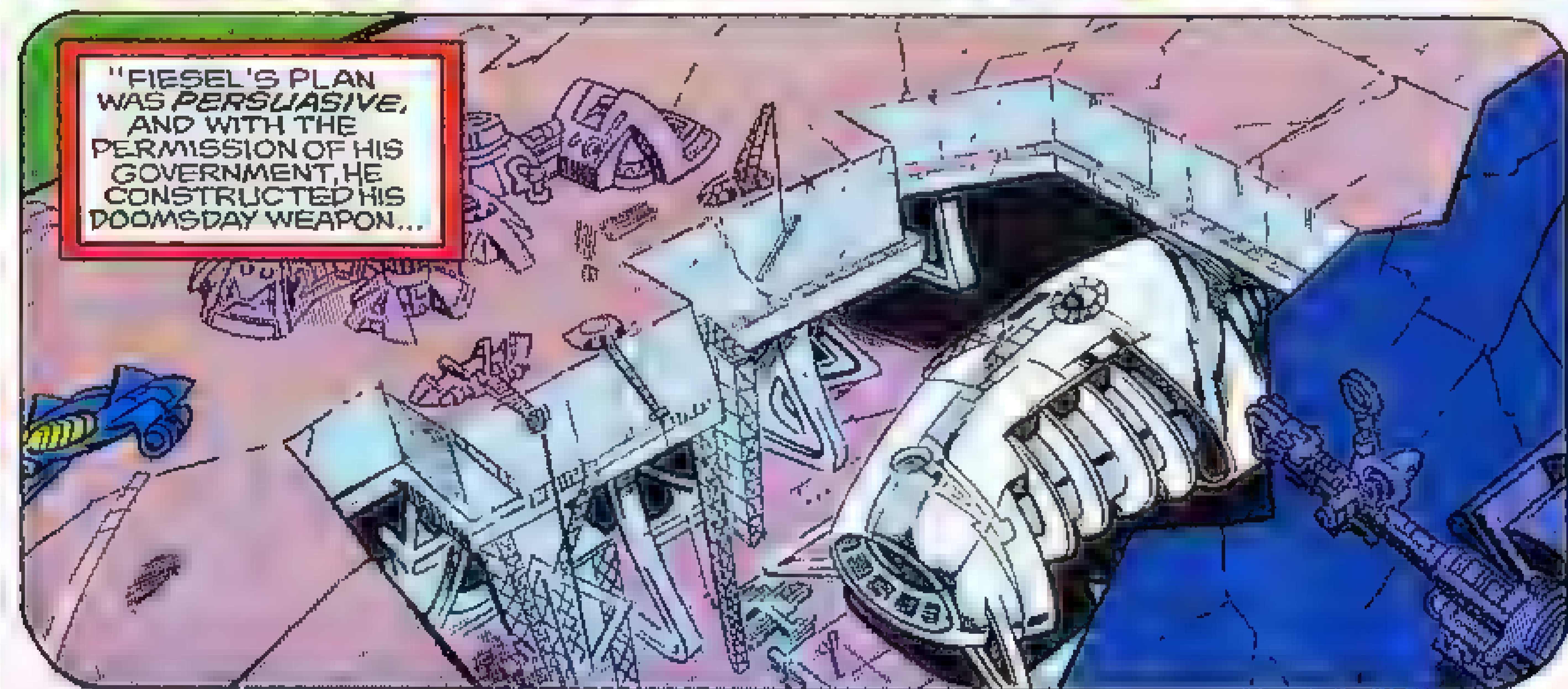
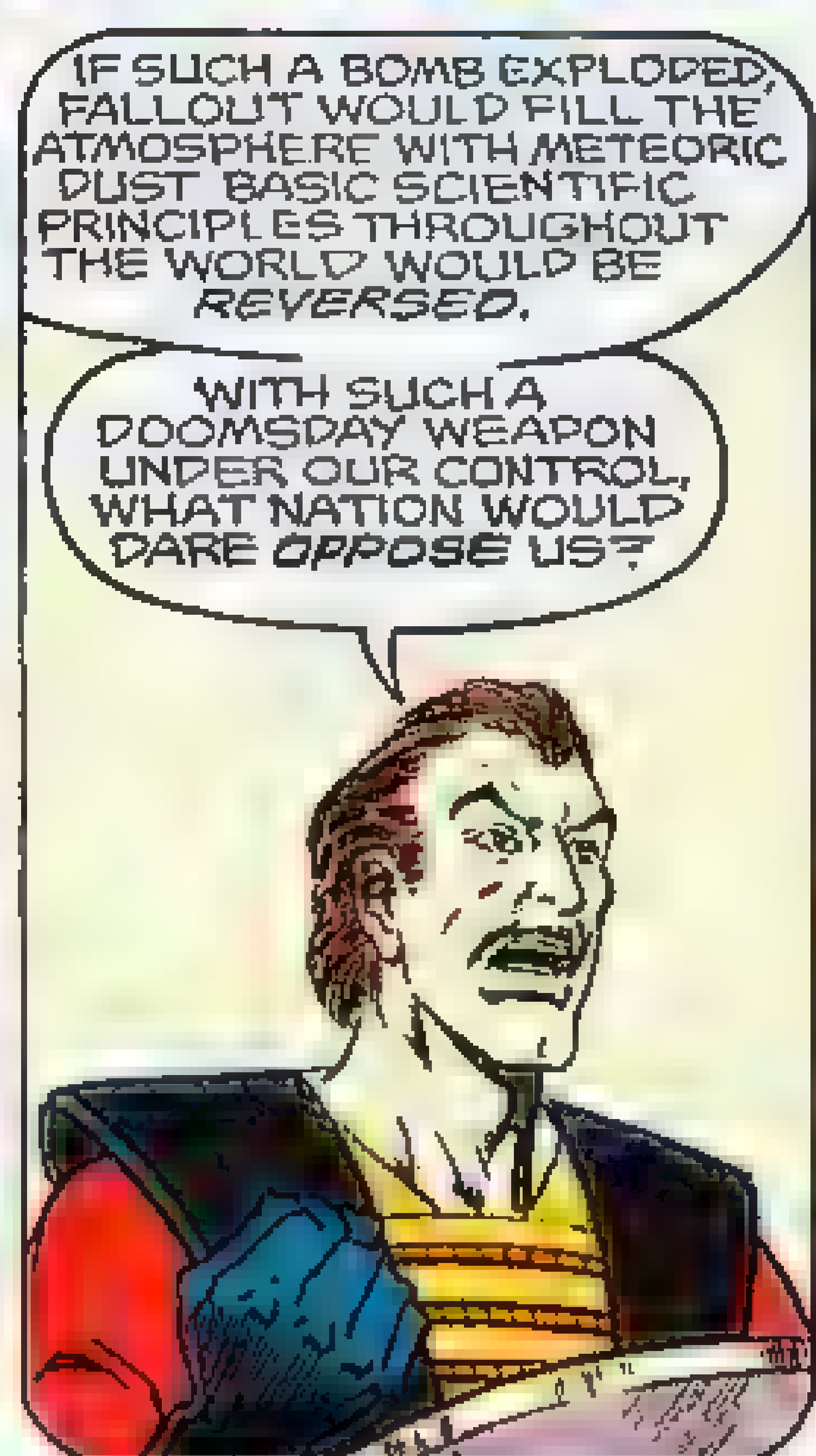
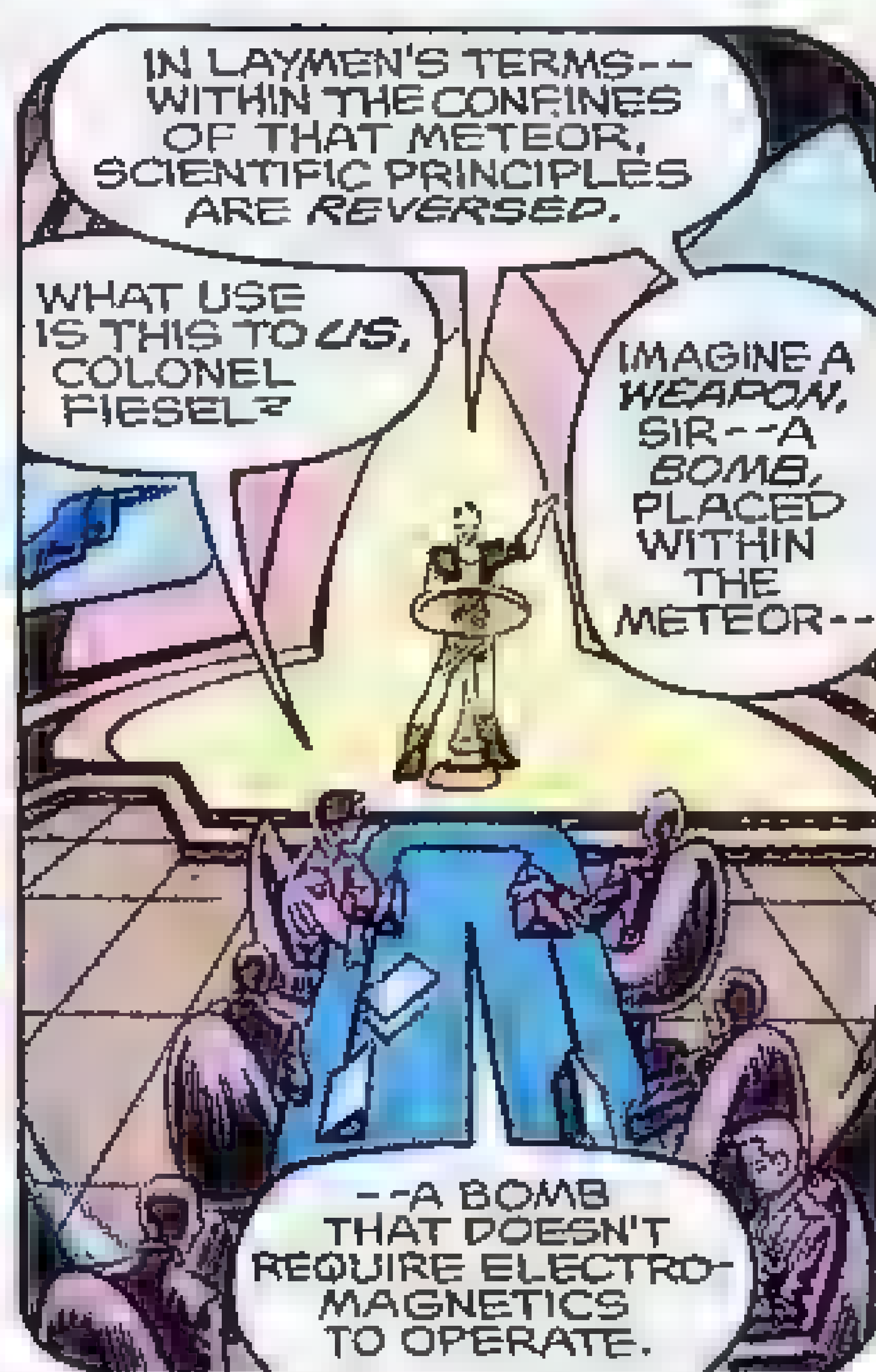
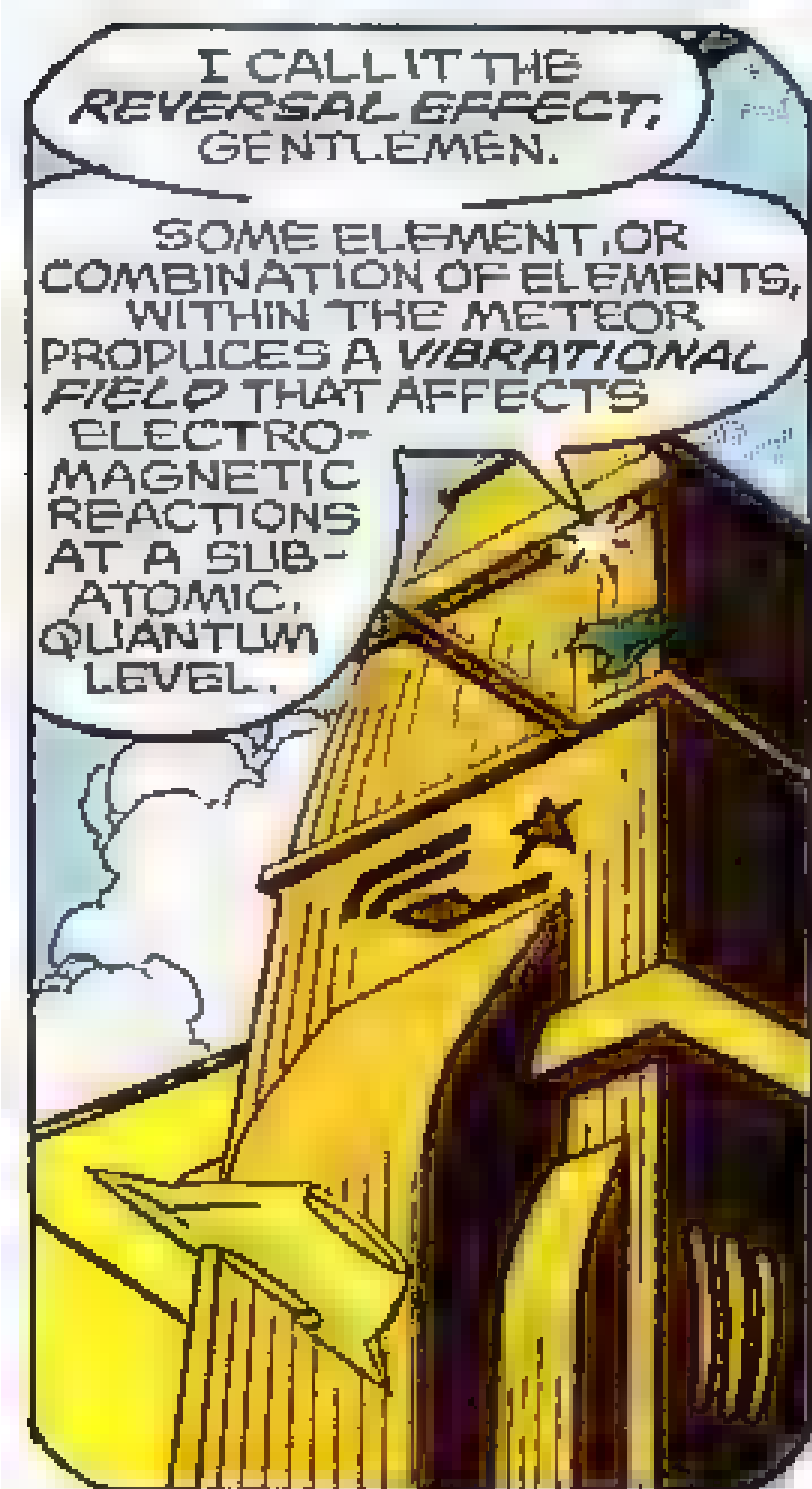
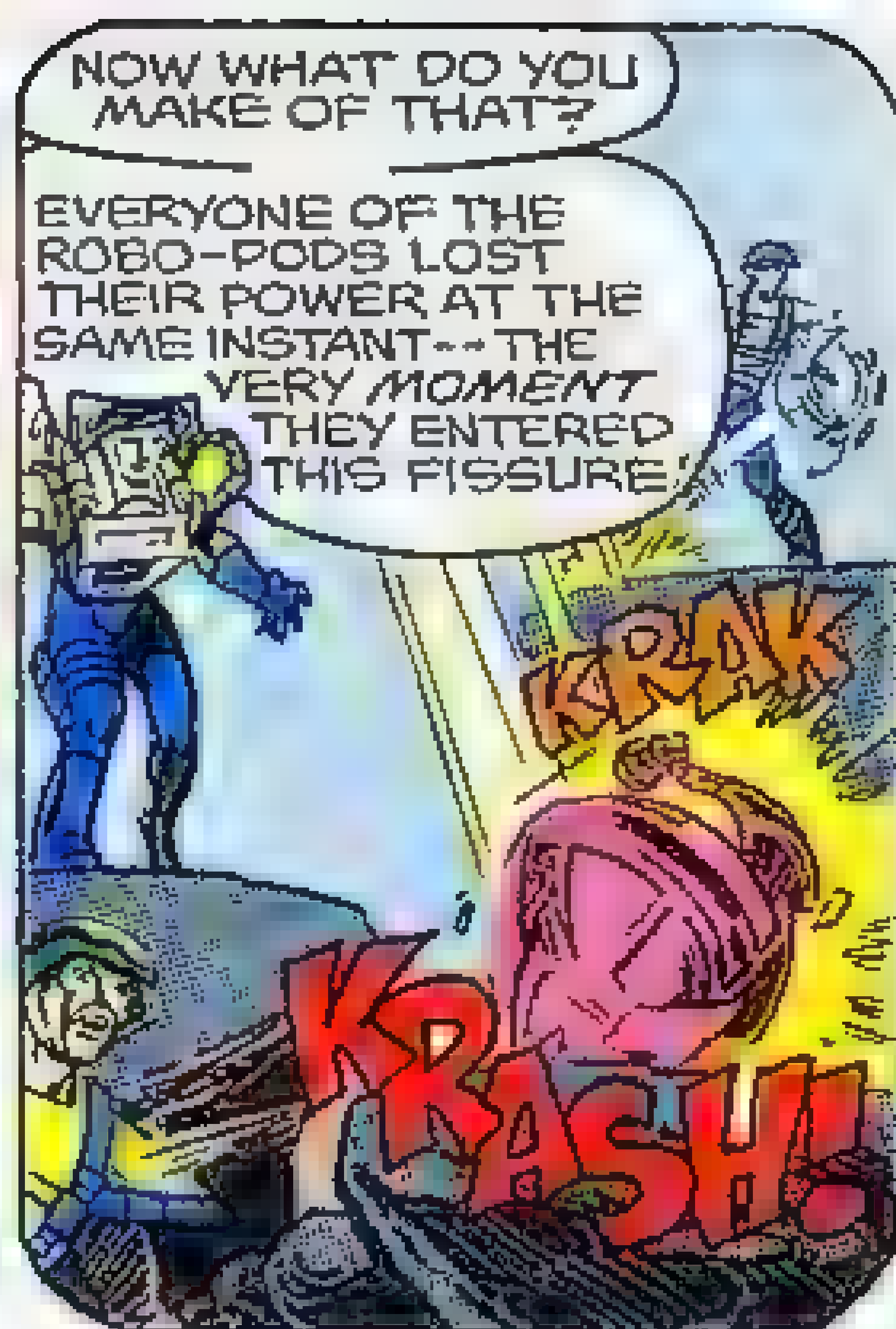
"...AND WHAT THEY
FOUND WAS A STONE
MILES WIDE THAT
SEEMED TO
VIBRATE WITH
UNCANNY POWER..."

CAREFUL, MEN.
TILL WE KNOW WHAT
WE'RE UP AGAINST,
ONLY *TECH-COLONEL
FIESEL*, HIS
ASSISTANTS, AND
THE *ROBO-PODS*
ARE ALLOWED INSIDE
THAT FISSURE.

"TECH-COLONEL
RAGNI FIESEL WAS
THE MOST BRILLIANT
WEAPONS TECHNOLOGY
EXPERT OF HIS TIME,
A MAN WHO UNDER-
STOOD THE WEAPONS
POTENTIAL OF ANY NEW
SCIENTIFIC
DISCOVERY ALMOST
INSTINCTIVELY..."

FIESEL TO BASE CAMP.
THERE'S SOMETHING *WRONG* WITH
THIS INSTRUMENT PACKAGE.

FIRST IT INDICATED A
HIGH *VIBRATIONAL* READING
OF SOME KIND. NOW IT'S
DEAD. I CAN'T--

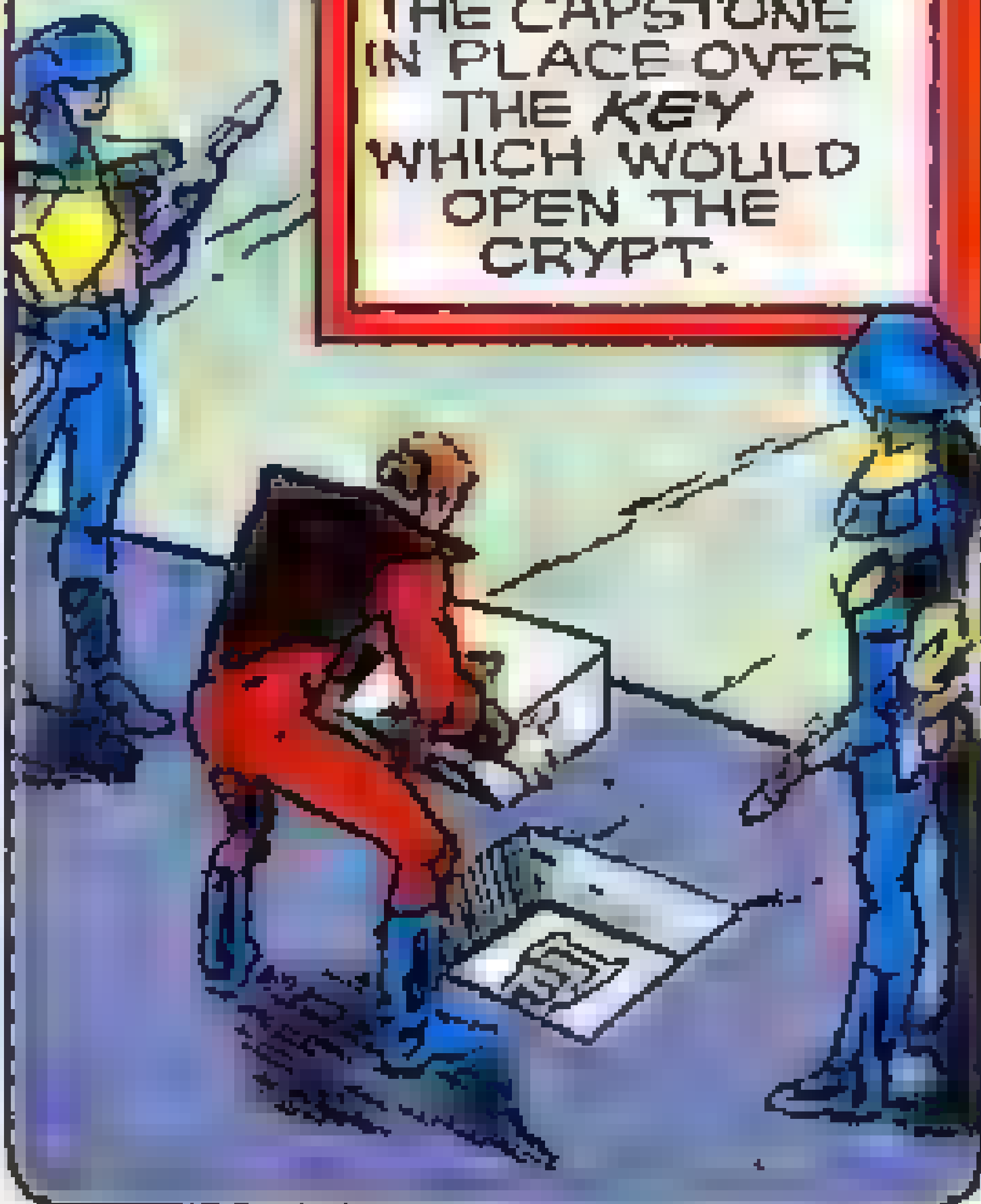


"SPECIAL MACHINES AND VEHICLES HAD TO BE BUILT TO WORK WITHIN THE REVERSAL FIELD, BUT IN TIME, THE WEAPON WAS COMPLETED..."

"...AND THE METEOR WAS SEALED LIKE A CRYPT."



"FIESEL HIMSELF SET THE CAPSTONE IN PLACE OVER THE KEY WHICH WOULD OPEN THE CRYPT."



"I WONDER WHAT WENT THROUGH HIS MIND THAT DAY, AS HE CONTEMPLATED THE WEAPON HE'D BUILT..."

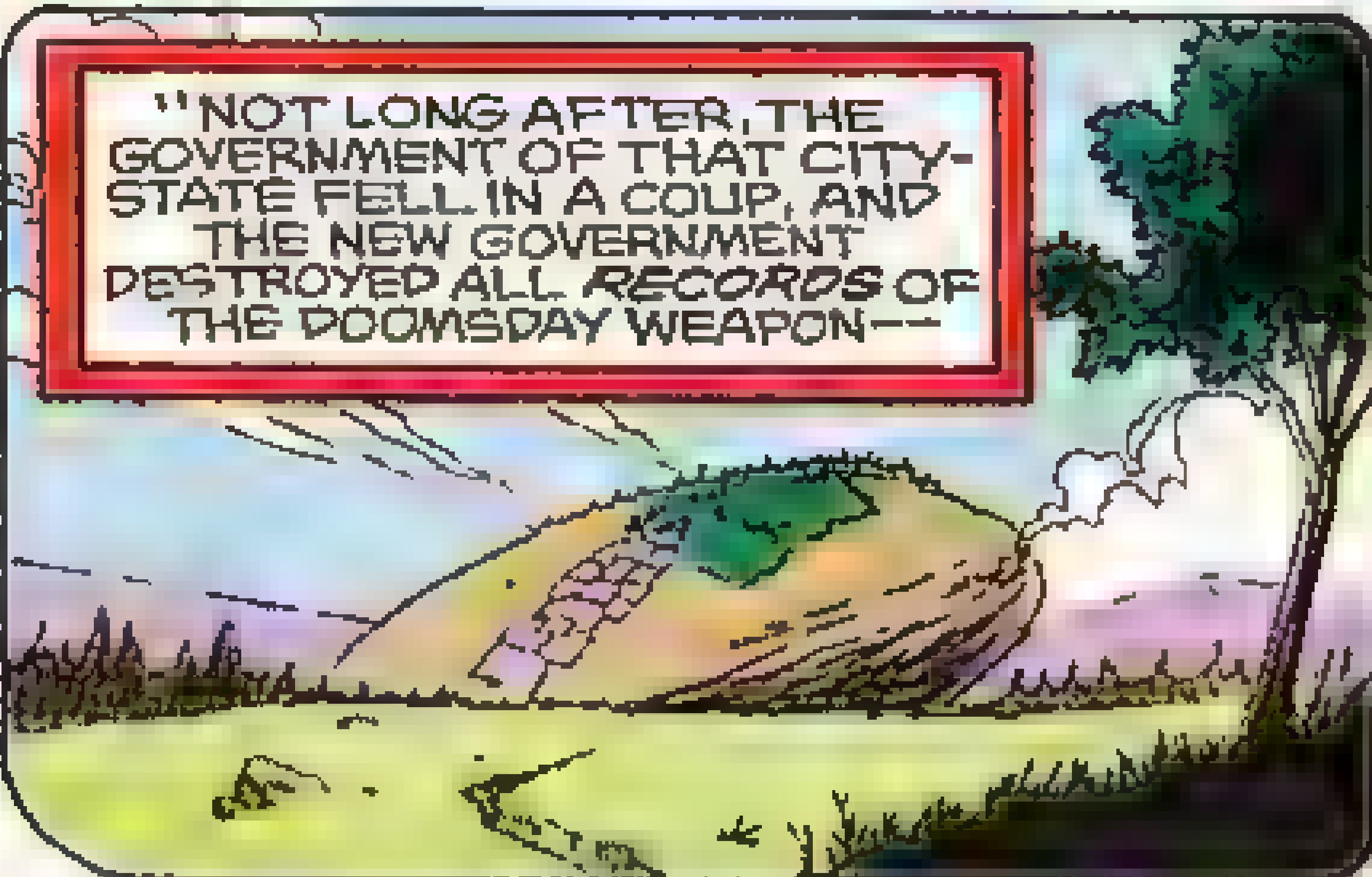


"... A WEAPON THAT COULD VERY WELL DESTROY THE WORLD AS HE KNEW IT."



"DID HE HAVE SECOND THOUGHTS? WE'LL NEVER KNOW, I SUPPOSE."

"NOT LONG AFTER, THE GOVERNMENT OF THAT CITY-STATE FELL IN A COUP, AND THE NEW GOVERNMENT DESTROYED ALL RECORDS OF THE DOOMSDAY WEAPON--"



"-- EXCEPT FOR THIS ONE SCROLL, LEFT AS A WARNING TO FUTURE GENERATIONS."

"AND SO, FOR MORE THAN TEN THOUSAND YEARS THE BOMB IN METEOR PEAK HAS LAIN UNDISCOVERED AND UNDISTURBED."



UNTIL NOW

LEORIC, DO YOU REALIZE WHAT THIS MEANS?

WHAT DO YOU THINK IT MEANS, ARZON?

JUSTICE!

JUSTICE FOR THOSE POOR SOULS WHOSE LIVES WERE SHATTERED BY THE COMING OF MAGIC.

WITH THE REVERSAL EFFECT, WE CAN REVERSE THE GREAT CHANGE--AND RESTORE THE AGE OF SCIENCE!

MERKLYN, IS THAT POSSIBLE?





POSSIBLE? PERHAPS. BUT WOULD IT TRULY BE *JUSTICE*?

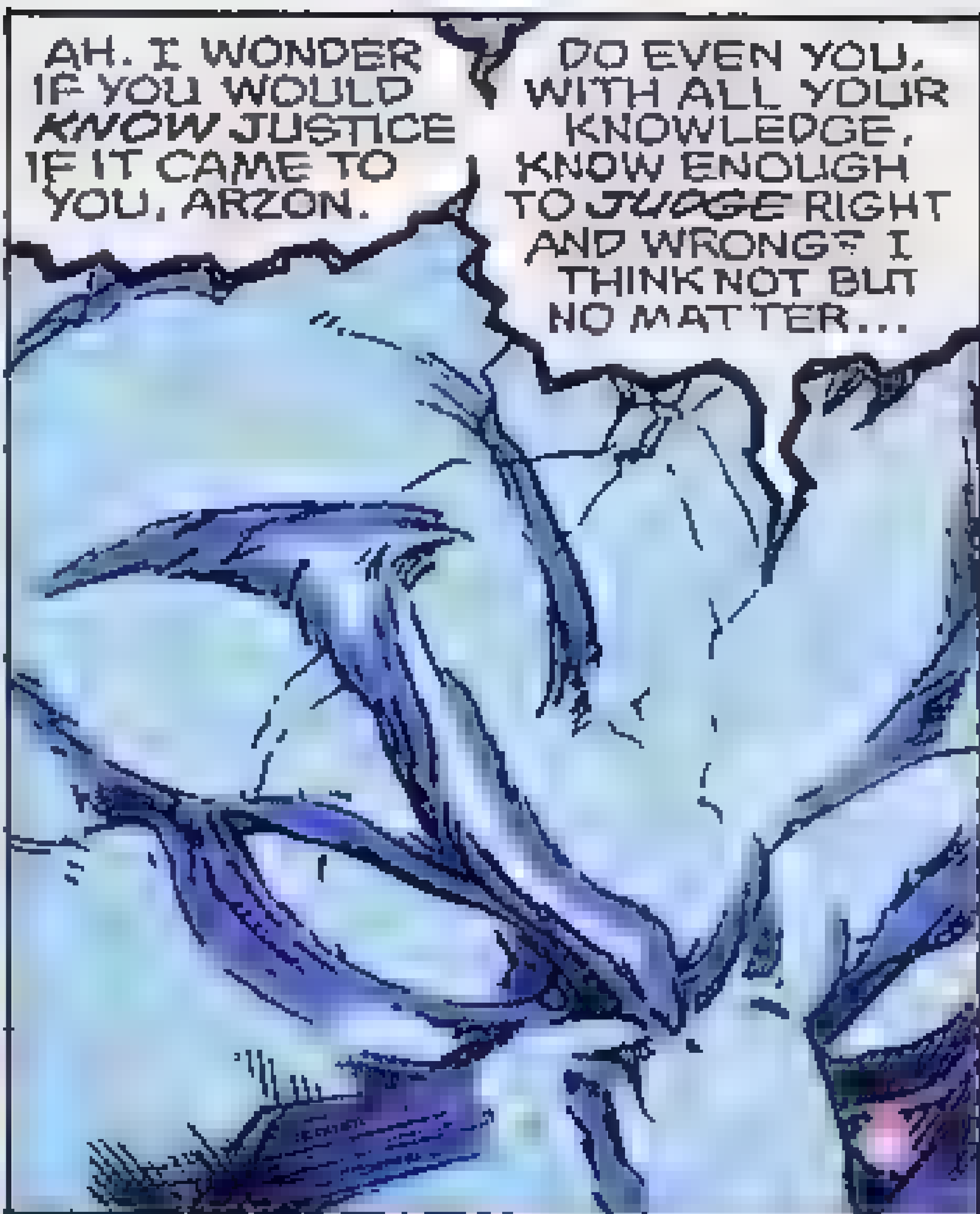
WHO ARE YOU TO CHALLENGE *DESTINY*?

I'LL TELL YOU WHO I AM!



I'M A MAN WHO HAS SEEN MORE PAIN AND SUFFERING THAN YOU SEE HIDING IN THIS MOUNTAIN!

I DEMAND *JUSTICE* FOR THE PEOPLE OF PRYSMOS!



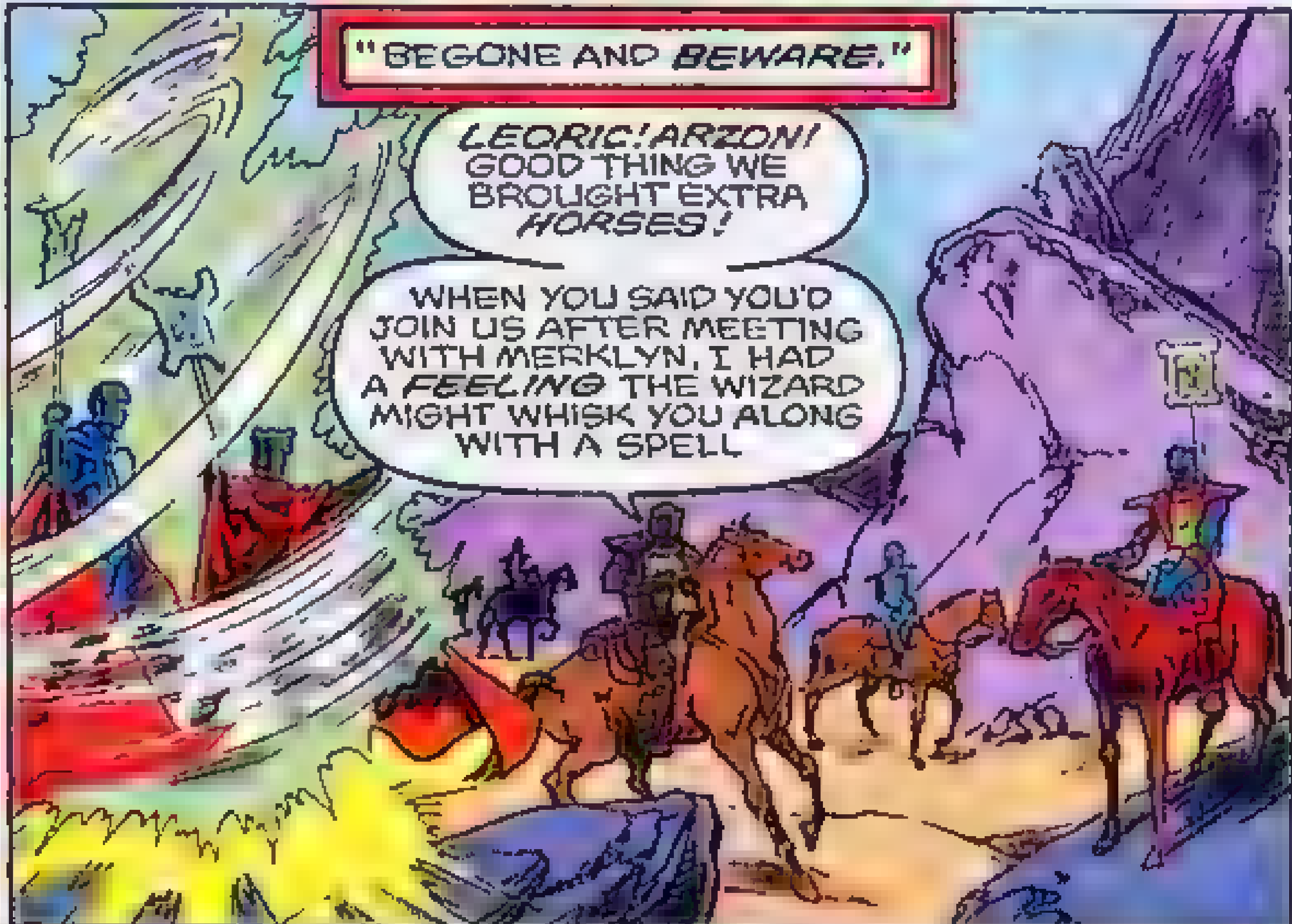
AH. I WONDER IF YOU WOULD *KNOW JUSTICE* IF IT CAME TO YOU, ARZON.

DO EVEN YOU, WITH ALL YOUR KNOWLEDGE, KNOW ENOUGH TO *JUDGE* RIGHT AND WRONG? I THINK NOT BUT NO MATTER...



THIS IS A ROAD YOU MUST TRUDGE. A DESTINY YOU MUST CONFRONT, AND THERE IS LITTLE I CAN DO BUT *HASTEN* YOU ON YOUR PATH.

BEGONE, KNIGHTS OF THE MAGICAL LIGHT.



"*BEGONE AND BEWARE.*"

LEORIC! ARZON! GOOD THING WE BROUGHT EXTRA HORSES!

WHEN YOU SAID YOU'D JOIN US AFTER MEETING WITH MERKLYN, I HAD A *FEELING* THE WIZARD MIGHT WHISK YOU ALONG WITH A SPELL



HOW FAR ARE WE FROM THE *DESTINATION* MARKED ON HARKON'S MAP, ECTAR?

LESS THAN TEN MILES WE'LL BE THERE BY SUNSET

ANY TROUBLE?



NONE TO SPEAK OF--THOUGH I HAVE A *FEELING* WE'VE BEEN *WATCHED* SINCE LEAVING NEW VALARAK

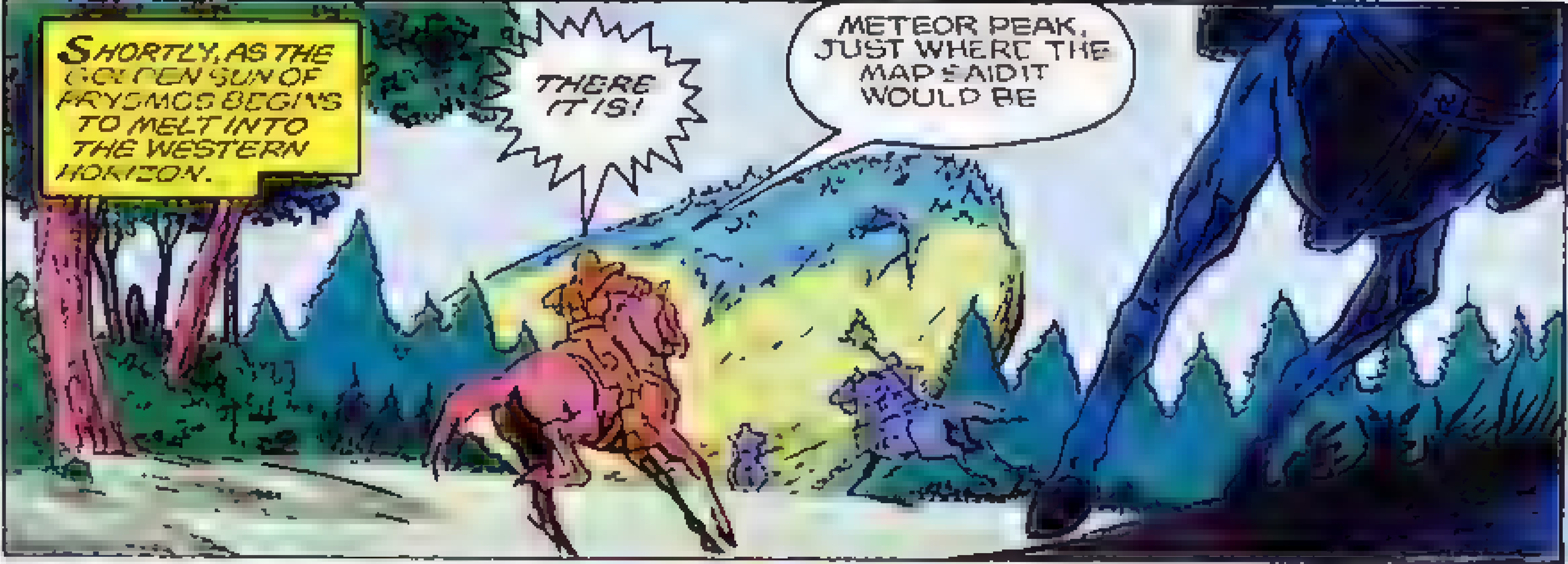
WHEN WILL YOU TELL US WHAT WE'RE *LOOKING* FOR, LEORIC?



"WHEN WE REACH *METEOR PEAK*, MY FRIEND, THEN *ALL* YOUR QUESTIONS WILL BE ANSWERED. MINE, AS WELL."

AND MINE, SPECTRAL KNIGHT! WE DARKLING LORDS HAVE QUESTIONS OF OUR OWN.

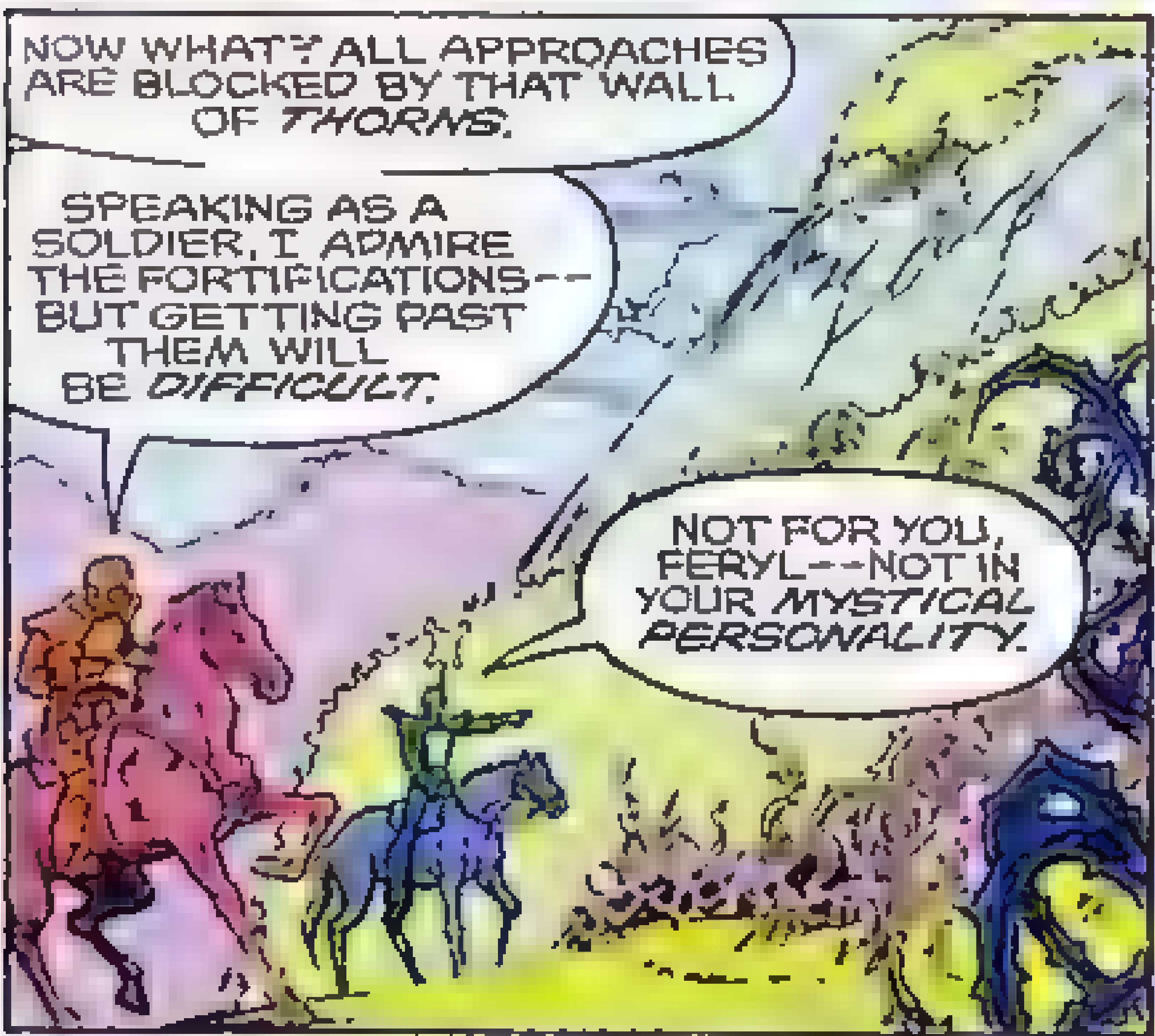
WE'LL BE MOST *INTERESTED* IN YOUR ANSWERS



SHORTLY, AS THE GOLDEN SUN OF FRYSMOS BEGINS TO MELT INTO THE WESTERN HORIZON.

THERE IT IS!

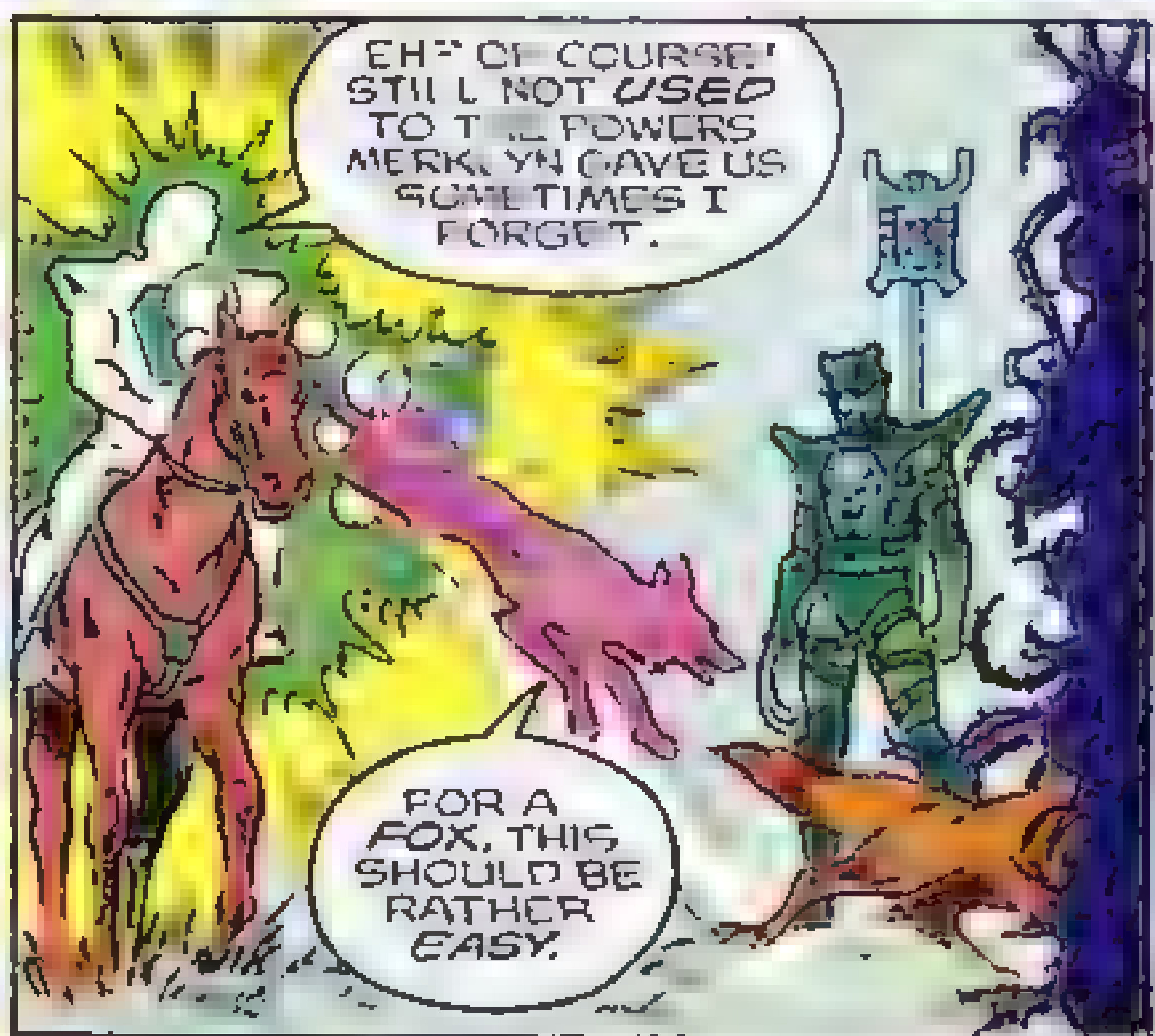
METEOR PEAK, JUST WHERE THE MAP SAID IT WOULD BE



NOW WHAT? ALL APPROACHES ARE BLOCKED BY THAT WALL OF THORNS.

SPEAKING AS A SOLDIER, I ADMIRE THE FORTIFICATIONS-- BUT GETTING PAST THEM WILL BE DIFFICULT.

NOT FOR YOU, FERYL---NOT IN YOUR MYSTICAL PERSONALITY.



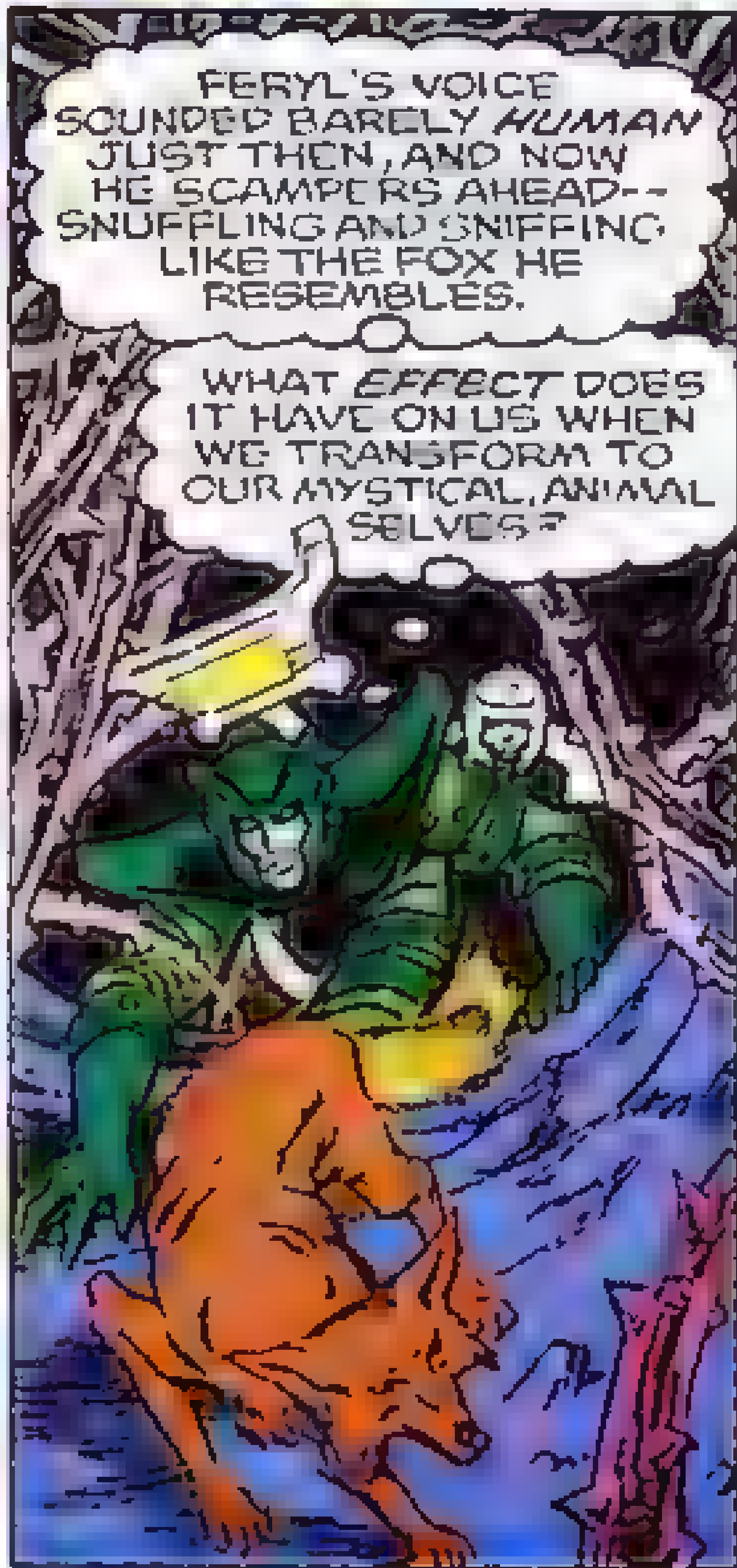
EH? OF COURSE! STILL NOT USED TO THE POWERS MERKLYN GAVE US. SOMETIMES I FORGET.

FOR A FOX, THIS SHOULD BE RATHER EASY.



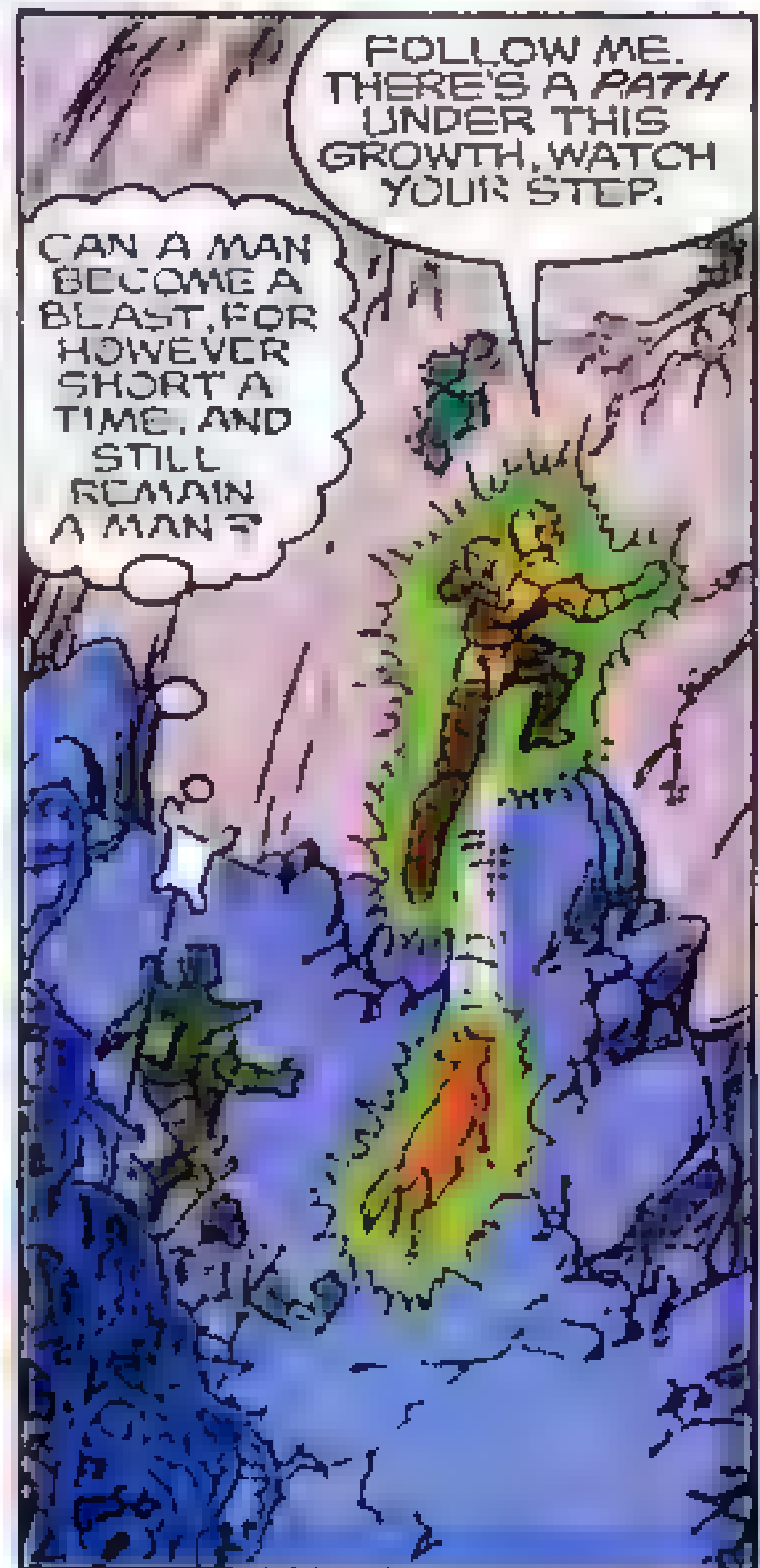
MINUTES CRAWL BY AS SHADOWS LENGTHEN, UNTIL FINALLY

YO, KNIGHTS! THIS WAY!



FERYL'S VOICE SOUNDED BARELY HUMAN JUST THEN, AND NOW HE SCAMPERS AHEAD-- SNUFFLING AND SNIFFING LIKE THE FOX HE RESEMBLES.

WHAT EFFECT DOES IT HAVE ON US WHEN WE TRANSFORM TO OUR MYSTICAL, ANIMAL SELVES?



FOLLOW ME. THERE'S A PATH UNDER THIS GROWTH. WATCH YOUR STEP.

CAN A MAN BECOME A BEAST, FOR HOWEVER SHORT A TIME, AND STILL REMAIN A MAN?

THERE'S SO MUCH WE DON'T UNDERSTAND ABOUT THE CHANGES THAT HAVE COME TO OURSELVES AND OUR WORLD.

MERKLYN MAY HAVE A POINT, AFTER ALL.

WHAT RIGHT HAVE WE TO CHALLENGE TOMORROW WHEN WE REMAIN SO IGNORANT ABOUT TODAY?

FIESEL'S CAP-STONE MUST BE HERE SOMEWHERE.

"A WHIM, A THOUGHT, AND MORE IS SOUGHT, AWAKE, MY MIND, THY WILL BE WROUGHT!"

AH!

HMM, THAT STONE LOOKS LIKE IT WEIGHS MORE THAN A HUNDRED POUNDS.

CRYOTEK, WE'LL NEED YOUR STRENGTH.

GLAD TO OBLIGE.

"THREE SUNS ALIGNED, FOUR FORTH THEIR LIGHT, AND FILL THE ARCHER'S BOW WITH MIGHT!"

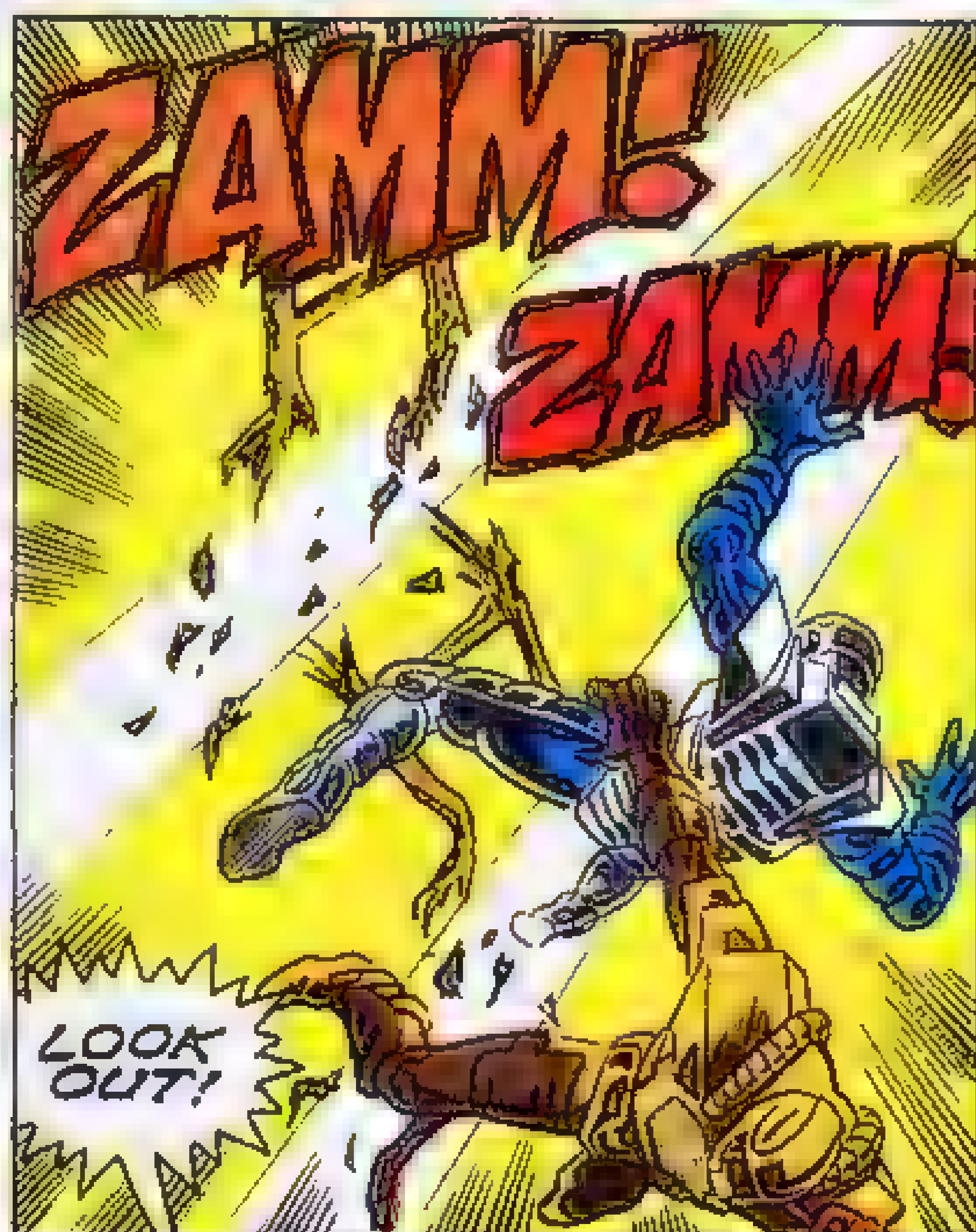
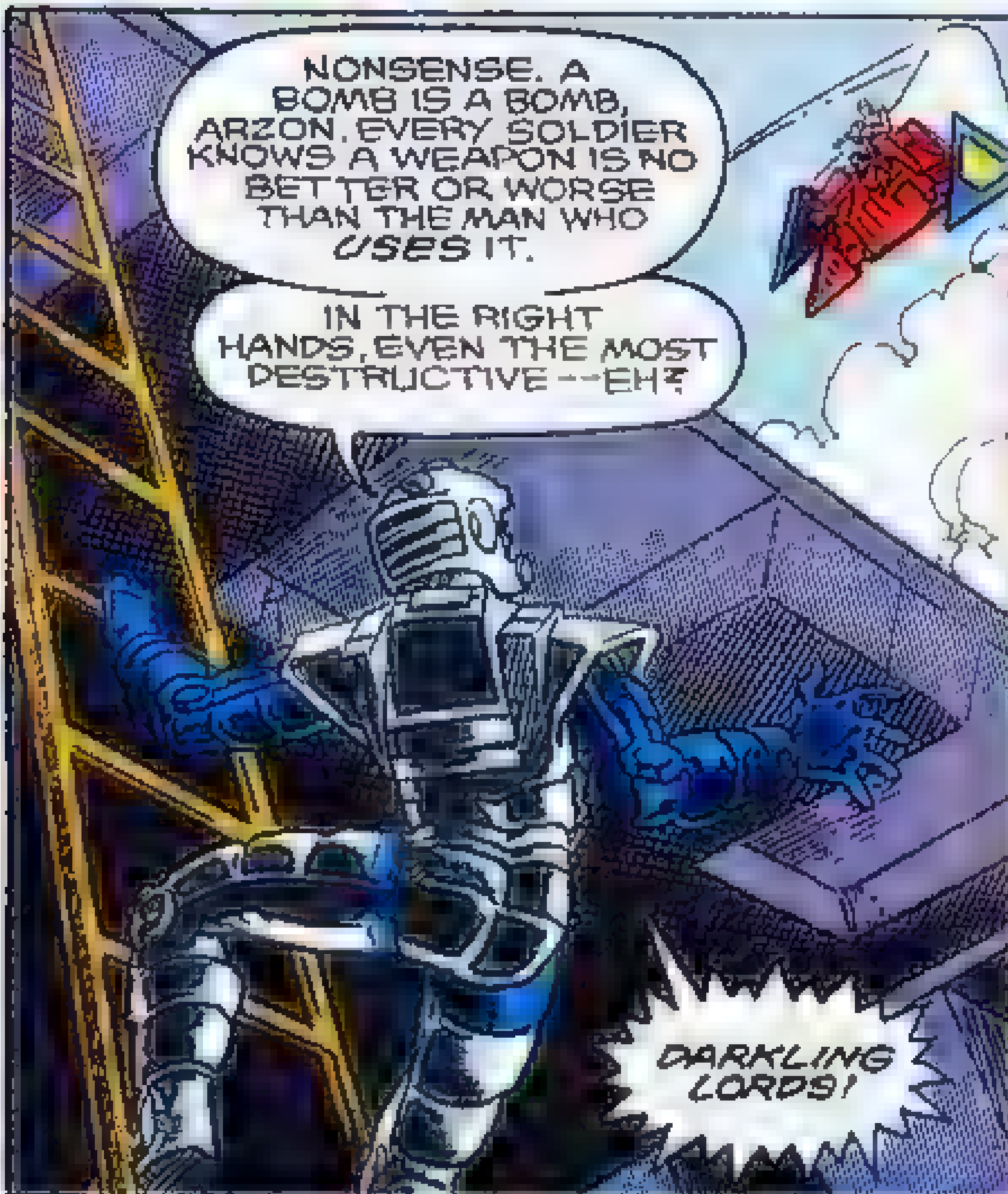
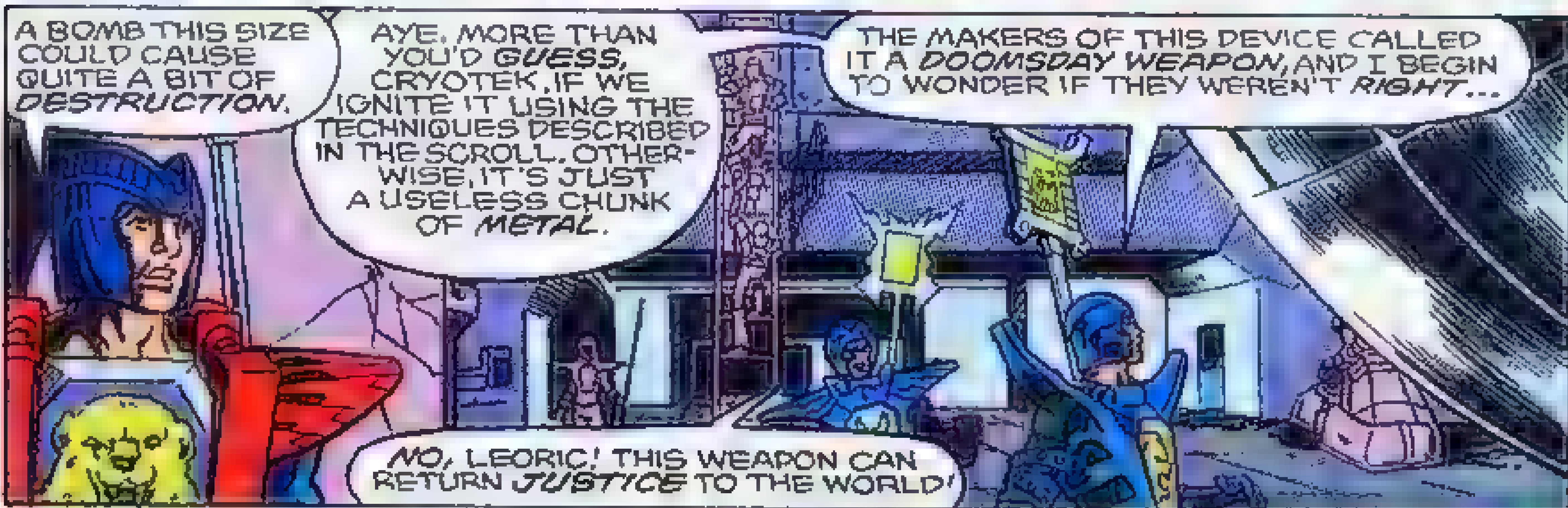
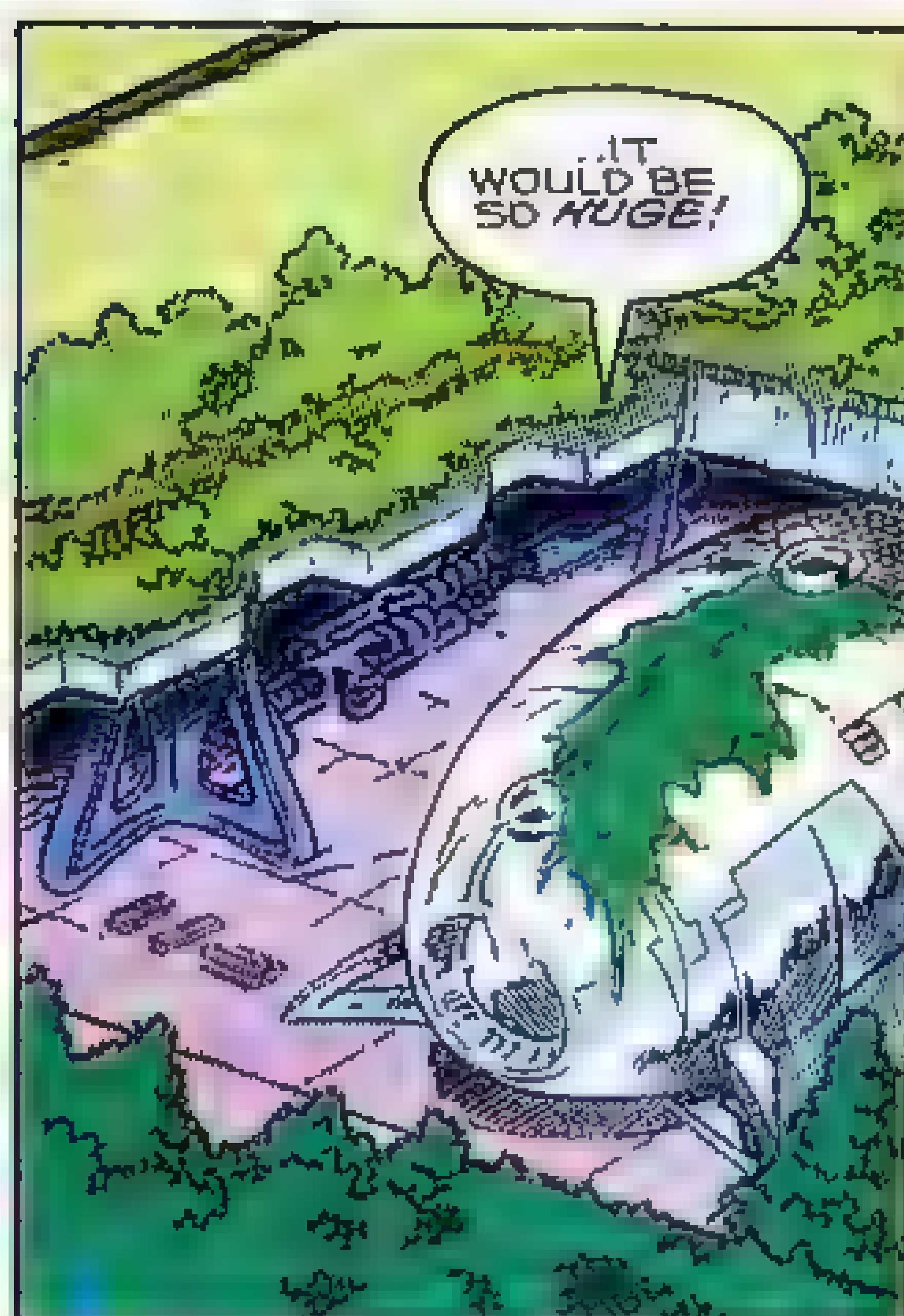
A WEAPON, CRYOTEK...

WHAT'S IN HERE?

A BOMB BEYOND IMAGINING...

...WITH THE POWER TO ALTER WORLDS.

KLIK!



WE HAVE THEM TRAPPED, DARKSTORM! FEEL OUR POWER, SPECTRAL KNIGHTS!

"O MIST-FILLED PITS, DARK, DARK, UNCLEAR, TOUCH ALL 'FORE ME WITH FROST-FINGERED FEAR"

THAT COWARD CRAVEX IS A MASTER OF TERROR! MY THROAT DRIES, MY HEART POUNDS- BUT I CANNOT LET THE OTHERS SEE THE PANIC THAT GRIPS ME!

L-LEORIC'S RIGHT, FERYL. ARE WE MEN OR C-CHILDREN?

HAVE, C-COURAGE!

STAND FAST, MY FRIENDS! THE FEAR YOU FEEL IS BUT AN ILLUSION!

I - I'M TRYING, ECTAR! I - I'M--

EH?

I ST-STEPPED NEAR THIS DUST-COVERED V-VEHICLE-- AND IT'S GLOWING WITH POWER!

SO IS THIS!

I'VE A FEELING ABOUT THIS, BOY! QUICK, HOP ABOARD!

MORTDRED, THEY'VE GOT VEHICLES OF SOME KIND! BLAST THEM WITH YOUR LASER CANNON!

DON'T ORDER ME ABOUT, VIRULINA! DARKSTORM COMMANDED ME TO MAKE YOU MY GUNNER, BUT I'M SKY CLAW'S PILOT, NOT YOU!

TEN MOONS! I MISSED!

FANTASTIC! THOSE VEHICLES WERE LEFT BY THE ENGINEERS WHO BUILT THIS PLACE-- THEY MUST HAVE BEEN DESIGNED TO WORK UNDER MAGICAL CONDITIONS!

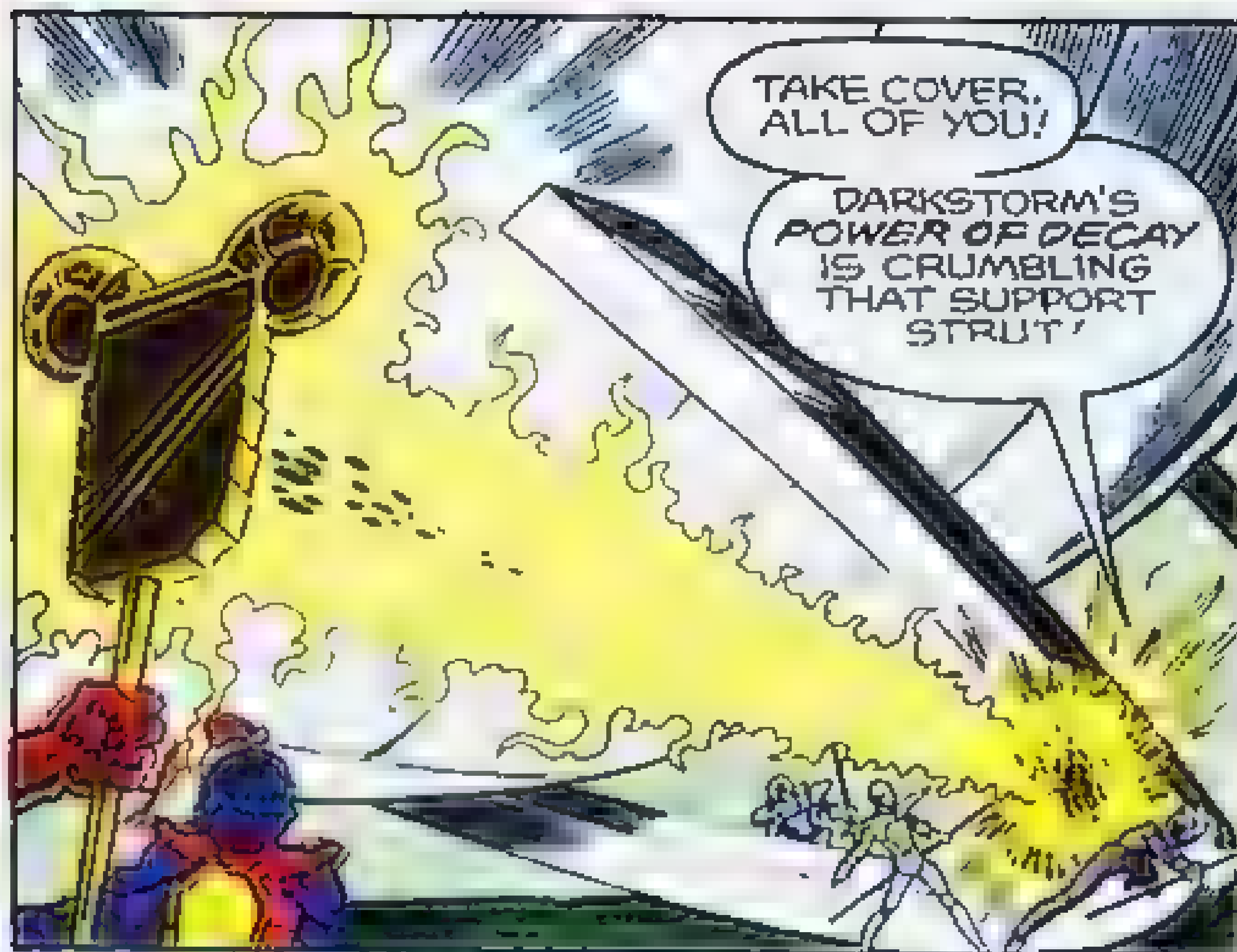
AND THEY'RE RESPONDING TO FERYL AND ECTAR THE WAY YOUR STAFFS RESPOND TO YOU!

DARKSTORM, THOSE VEHICLES WILL GIVE THE KNIGHTS A PERMANENT EDGE OVER US!

NOT IF WE DESTROY THEM, CINDARR--

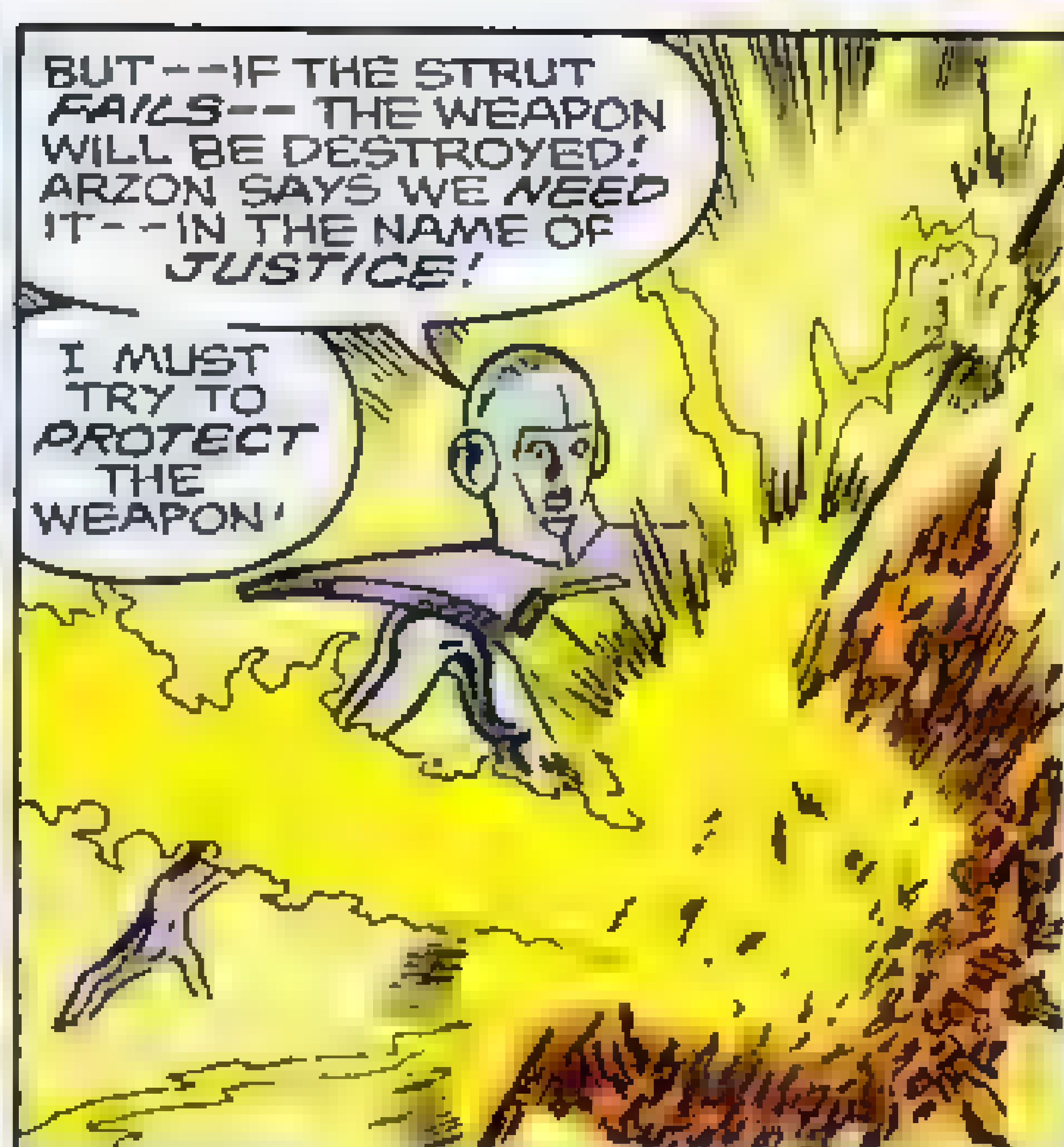
--AND CLAIM THAT BOMB FOR OURSELVES!

"BY WHAT CREEPS, WHAT CRAWLS, BY WHAT DOES NOT, LET ALL THAT GROWS RECEDE AND ROT"



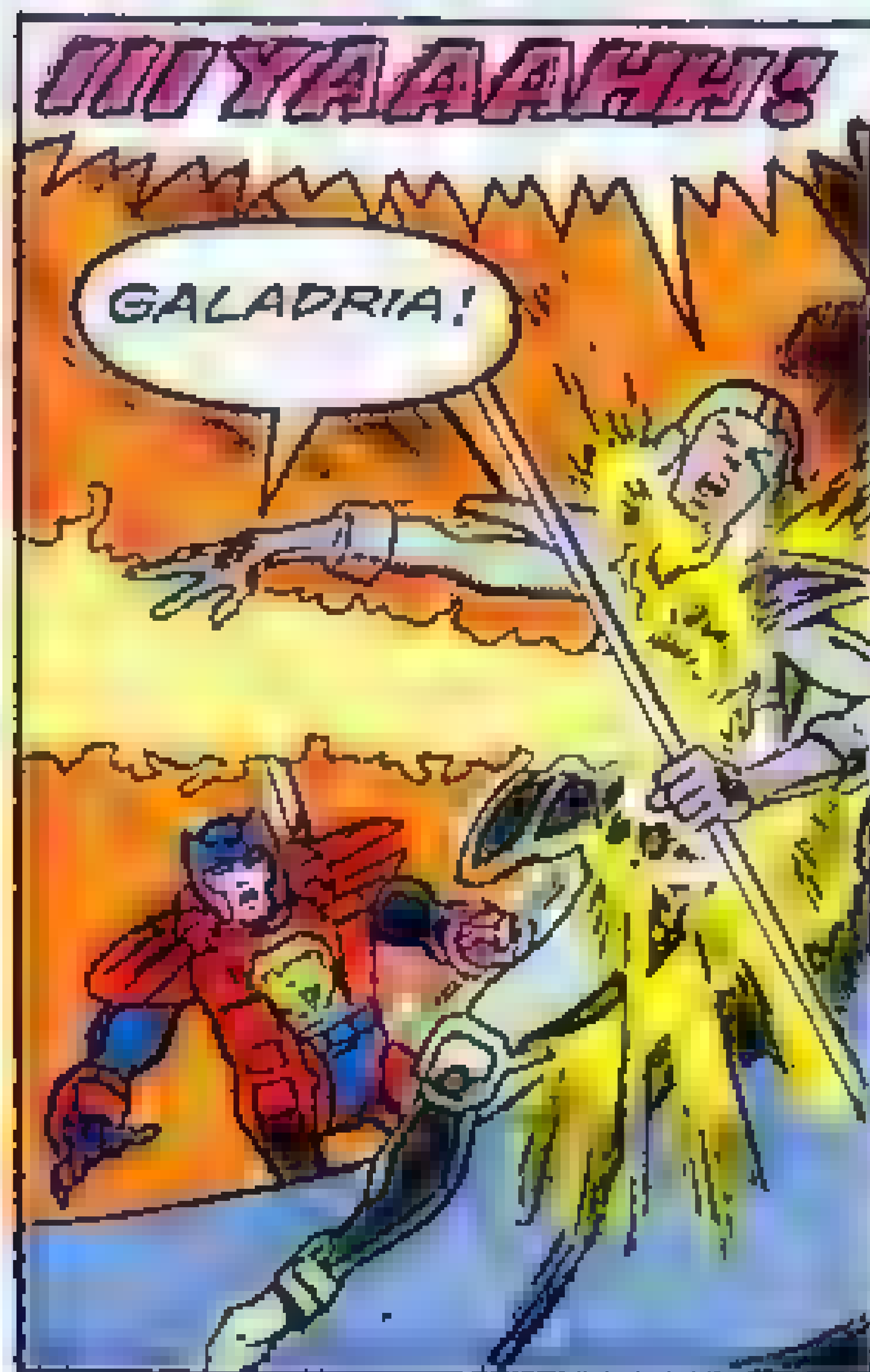
TAKE COVER,
ALL OF YOU!

DARKSTORM'S
POWER OF DECAY
IS CRUMBLING
THAT SUPPORT
STRUT!



BUT--IF THE STRUT
FAILS-- THE WEAPON
WILL BE DESTROYED!
ARZON SAYS WE NEED
IT-- IN THE NAME OF
JUSTICE!

I MUST
TRY TO
PROTECT
THE
WEAPON!



IIIIYAAAAHH!

GALADRIA!



SHE THREW
HERSELF IN FRONT
OF DARKSTORM'S
BEAM! ANOTHER
MOMENT AND SHE
MIGHT HAVE BEEN
KILLED!

CURSE YOU,
DARKSTORM!
CURSE
YOU!

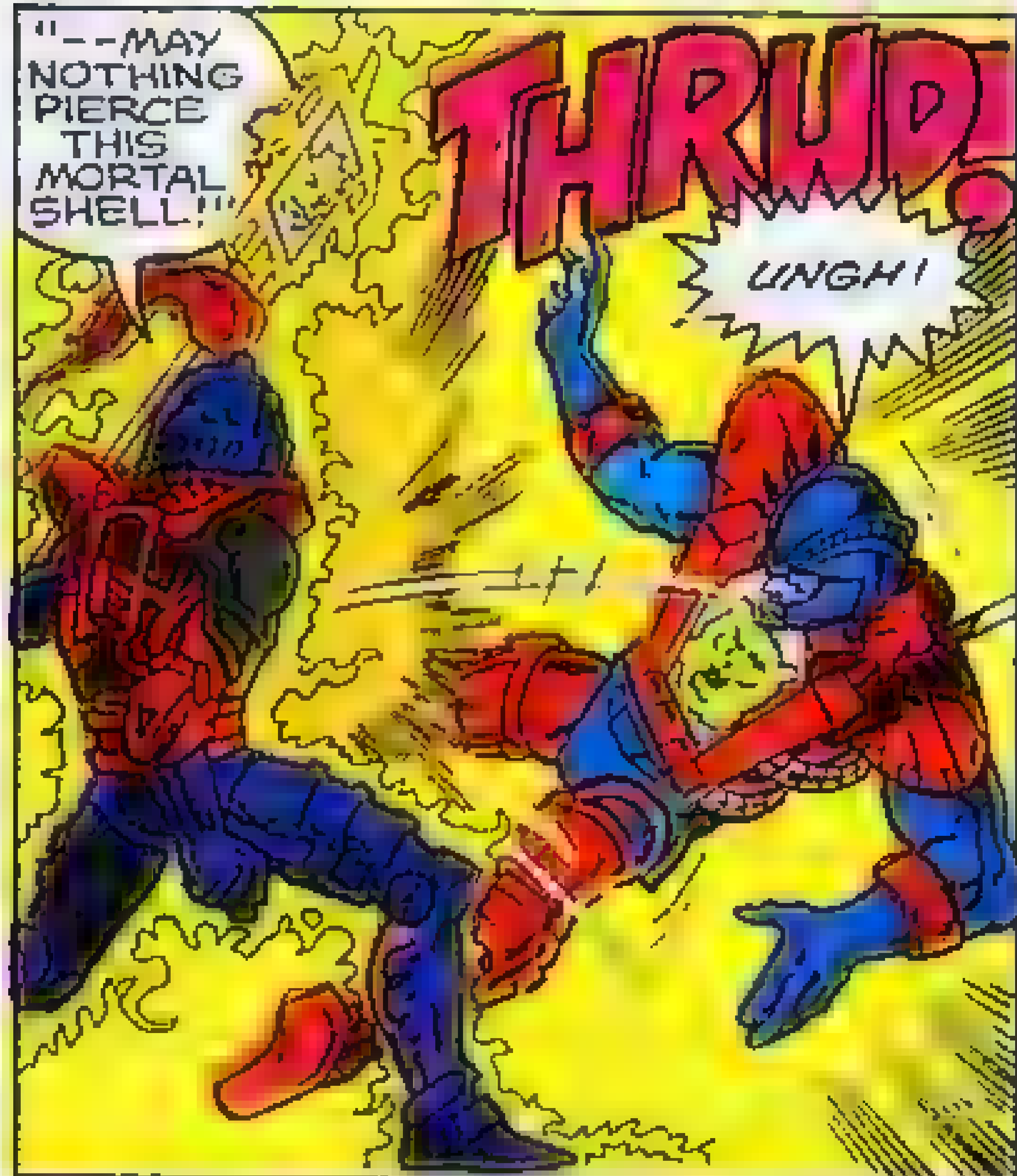


LEXOR, DEFEND
YOUR MASTER!

WITH
PLEASURE,
MY LORD

"THE ARROWS
TURN, THE
SWORD
REBELS--"

AAARRGHH!



"--MAY
NOTHING
PIERCE
THIS
MORTAL
SHELL!"

THRUUD!

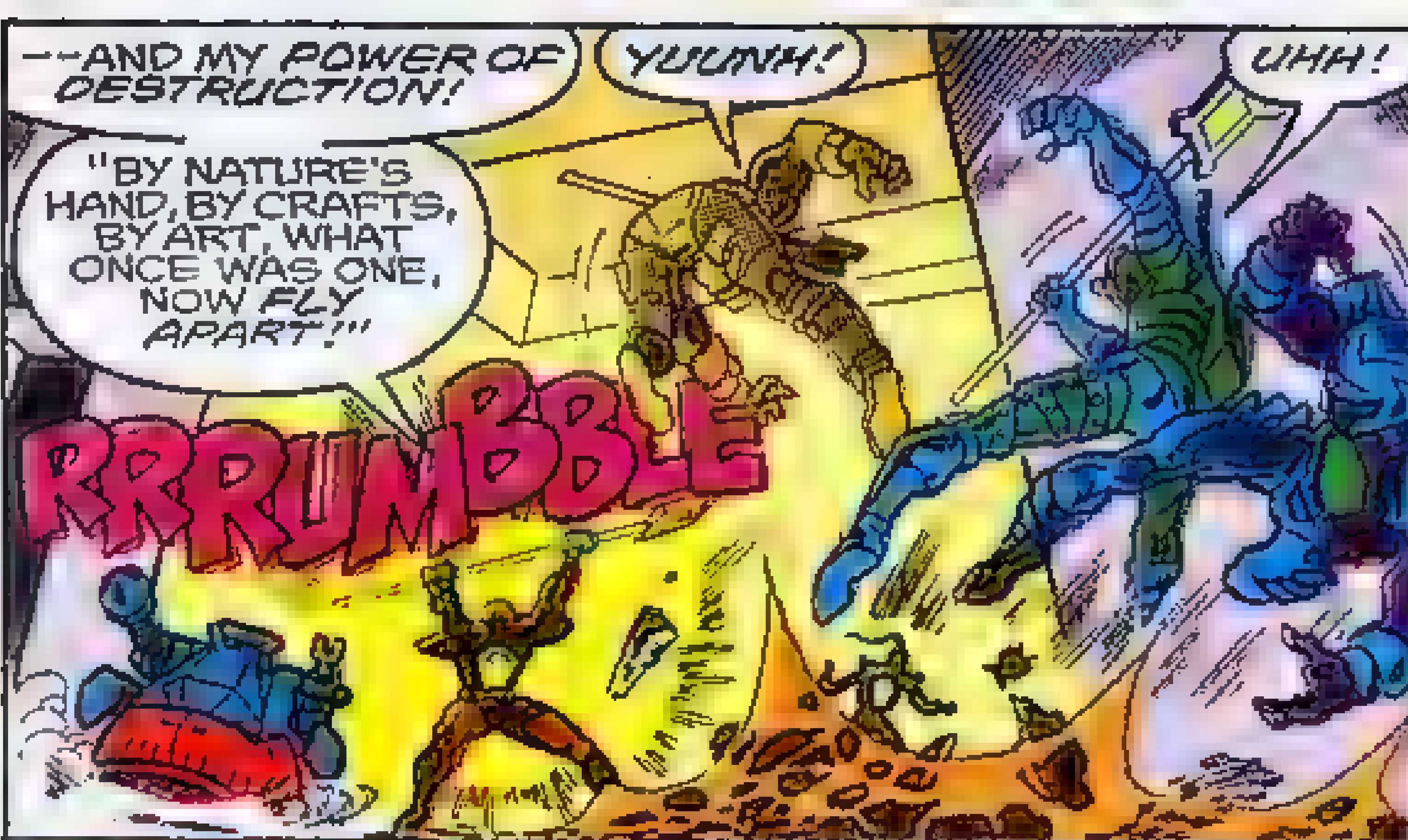
UNGH!



HA! NOT EVEN
CRYOTEK'S BEAR-
LIKE STRENGTH
CAN OVERWHELM
MY POWER OF
INVULNERABILITY!
IN A WAY I'M THE
GREATEST OF THE
DARKLING LOR--
OOFF!

BE QUIET, FOOL!

YOU CAN
DEFEND BUT YOU
CAN'T ATTACK.
FOR THAT, YOU
NEED CINDARR--



--AND MY POWER OF DESTRUCTION!

"BY NATURE'S HAND, BY CRAFTS, BY ART, WHAT ONCE WAS ONE, NOW FLY APART!"

YULNH!

UHH!

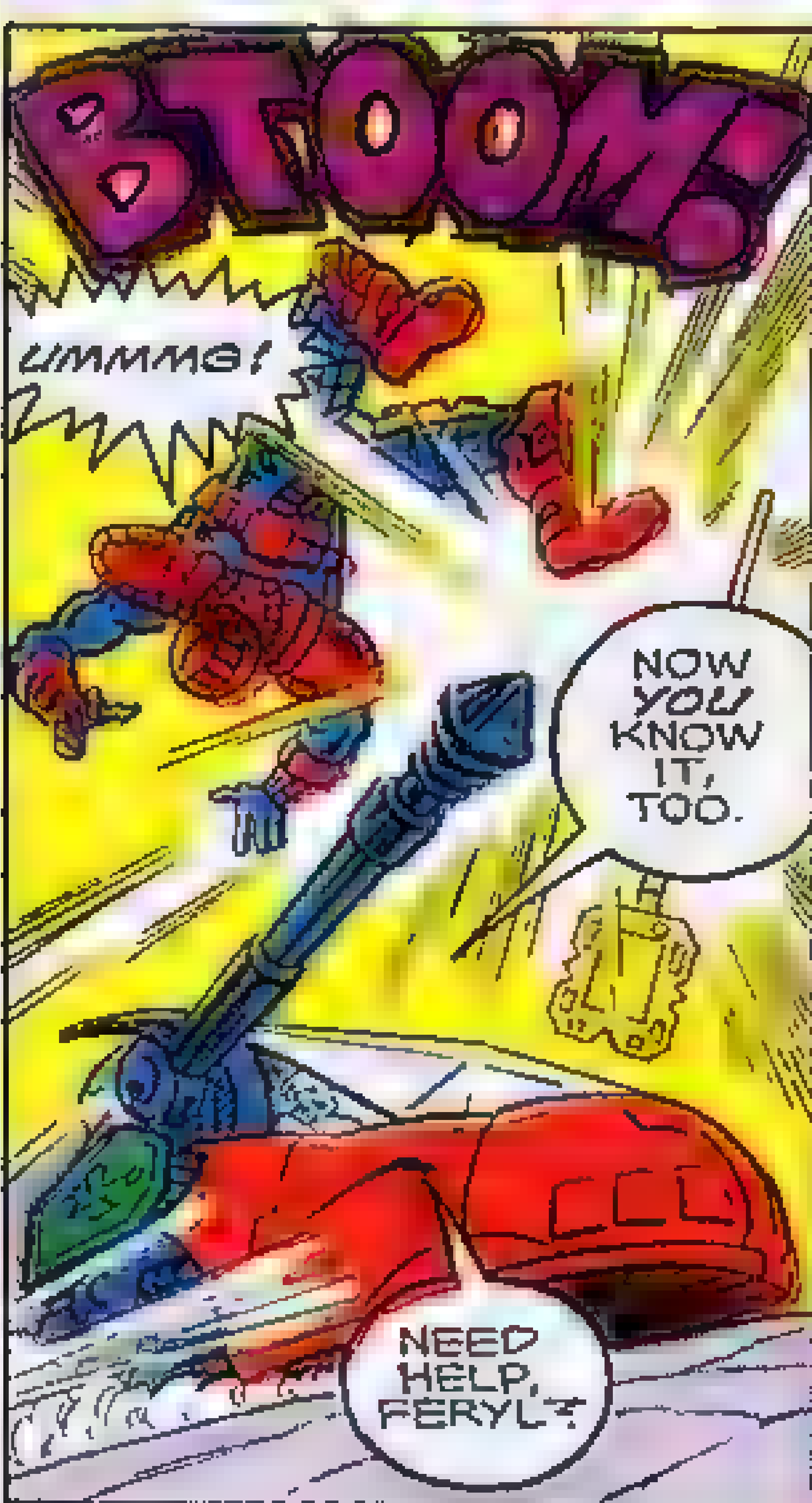
RRRUMBBLE



VRROOOM

EH?

AN OFFENSE WITHOUT A DEFENSE IS NO KIND OF STRATEGY, CINDARR, THAT'S THE FIRST LESSON A SOLDIER LEARNS.

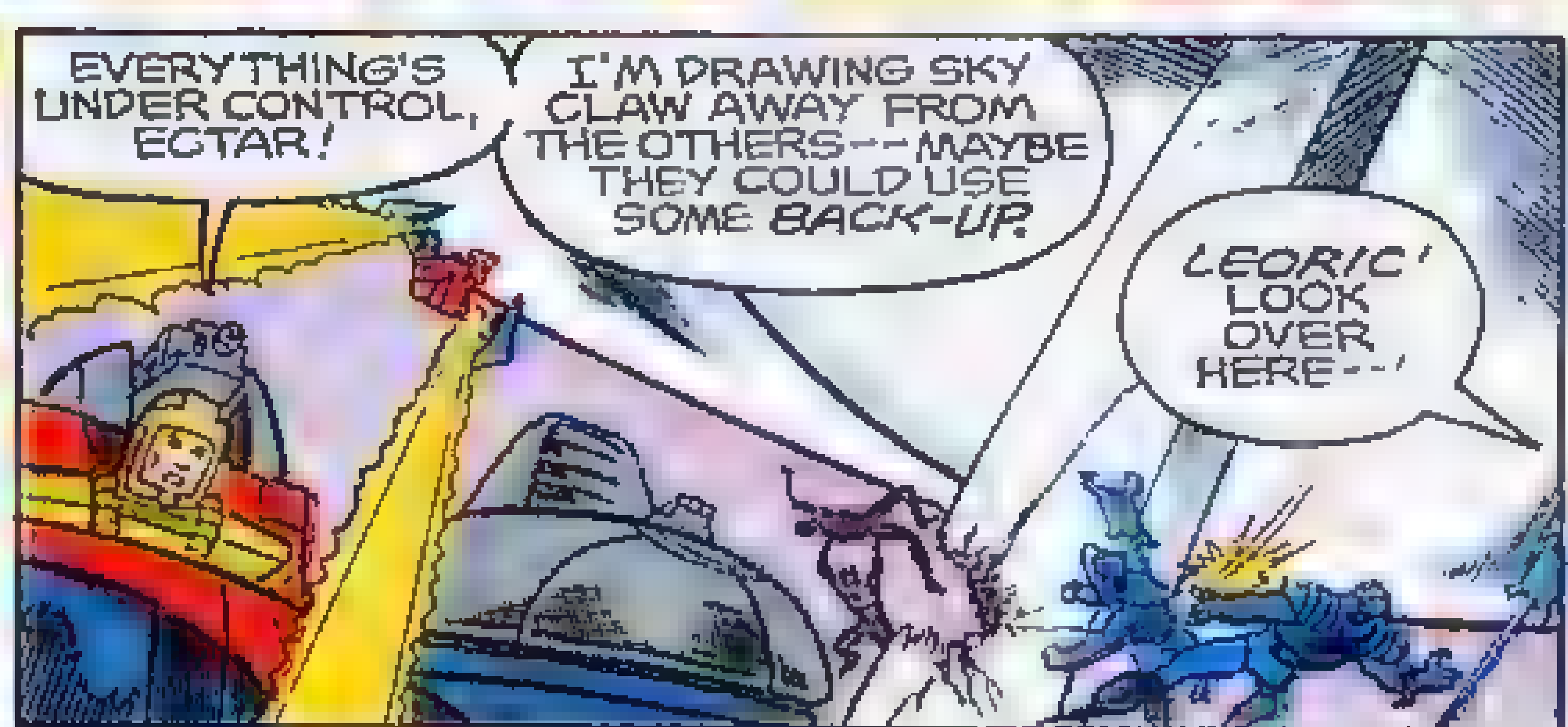


BTOOM!

UIMMM!

NOW YOU KNOW IT, TOO.

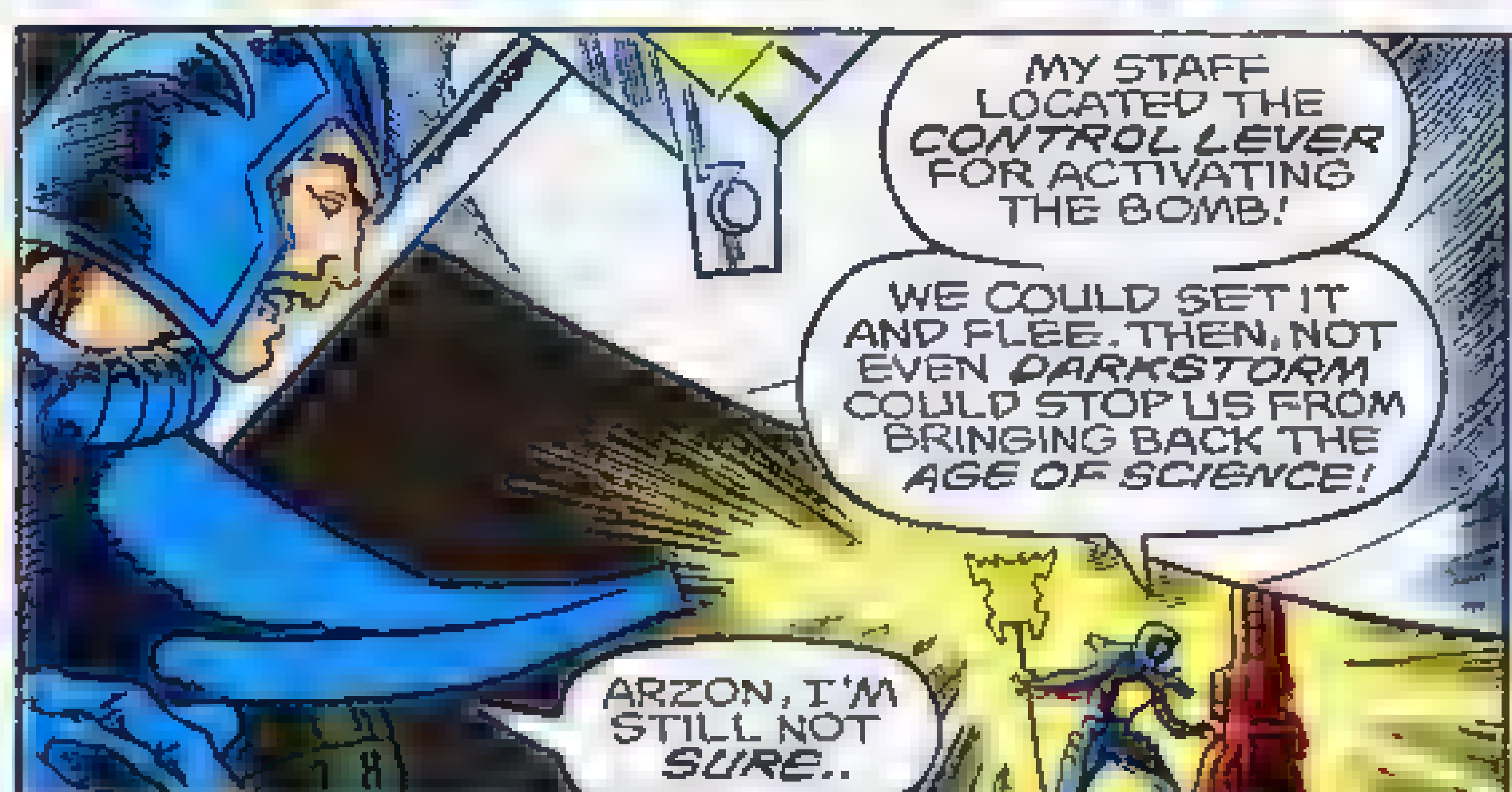
NEED HELP, FERYL?



EVERYTHING'S UNDER CONTROL, ECTAR!

I'M DRAWING SKY CLAW AWAY FROM THE OTHERS-- MAYBE THEY COULD USE SOME BACK-UP.

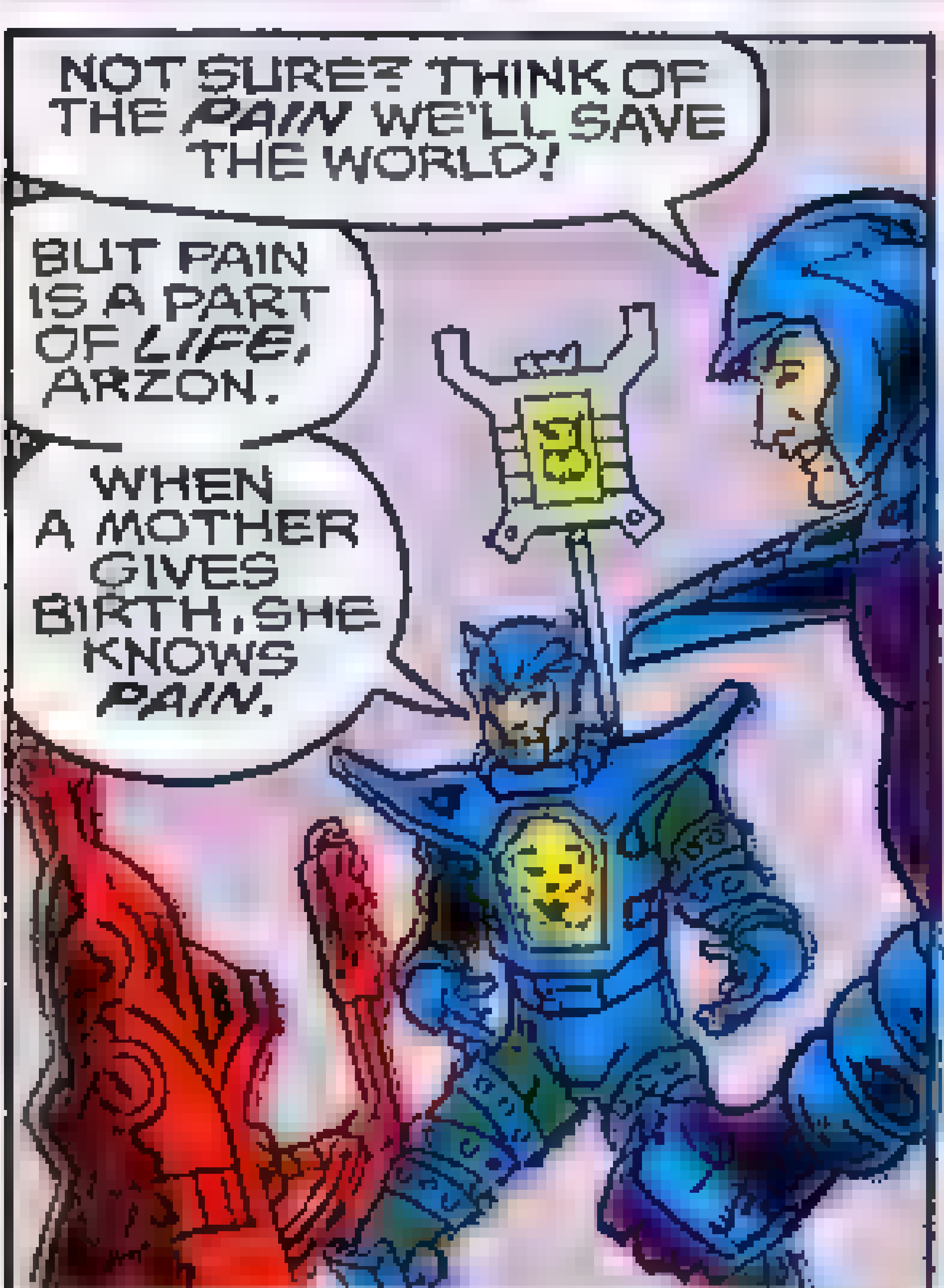
LEORIC! LOOK OVER HERE--!



MY STAFF LOCATED THE CONTROL LEVER FOR ACTIVATING THE BOMB!

WE COULD SET IT AND FLEE. THEN, NOT EVEN DARKSTORM COULD STOP US FROM BRINGING BACK THE AGE OF SCIENCE!

ARZON, I'M STILL NOT SURE..



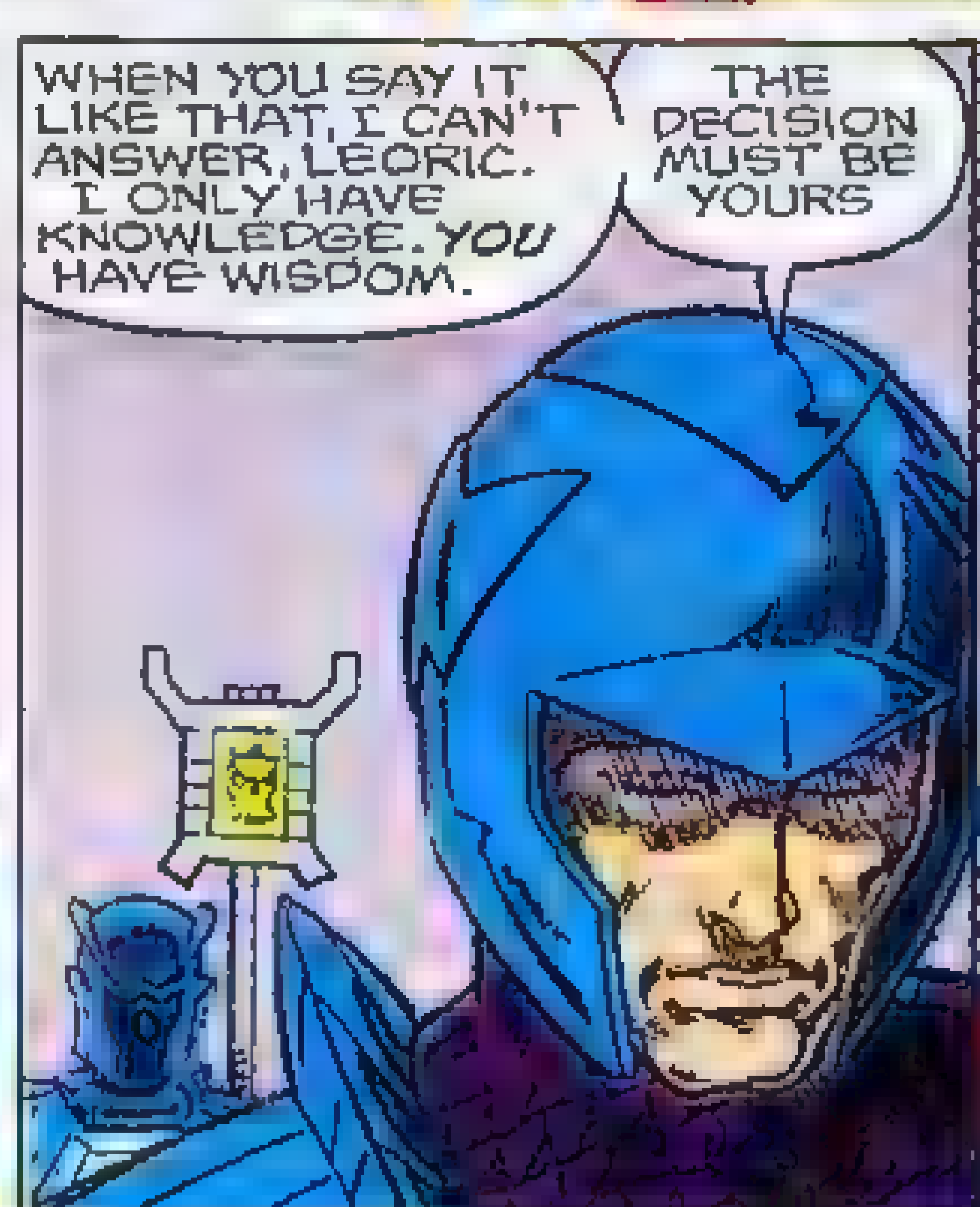
NOT SURE? THINK OF THE PAIN WE'LL SAVE THE WORLD!

BUT PAIN IS A PART OF LIFE, ARZON.

WHEN A MOTHER GIVES BIRTH, SHE KNOWS PAIN.



WOULD WE DENY THE NEWBORN CHILD TO SAVE THE MOTHER PAIN?

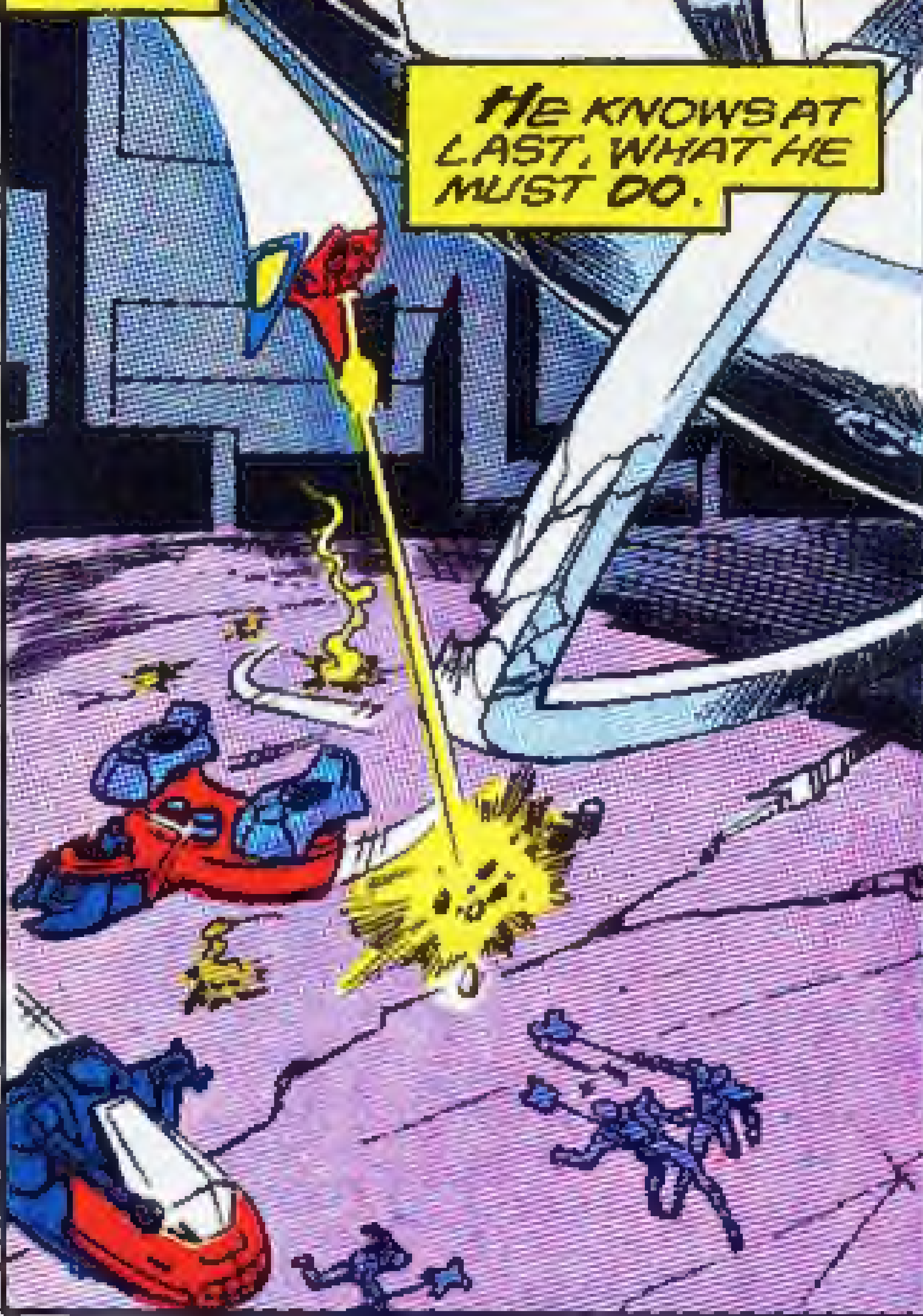


WHEN YOU SAY IT LIKE THAT, I CAN'T ANSWER, LEORIC. I ONLY HAVE KNOWLEDGE. YOU HAVE WISDOM.

THE DECISION MUST BE YOURS

FOR THE FIRST TIME SINCE ENTERING THIS PLACE, LEORIC DRAWS HIMSELF UPRIGHT AND LOOKS ABOUT WITH CONFIDENCE AT THE SCENE OF BATTLE ABOUT HIM...

HE KNOWS AT LAST, WHAT HE MUST DO.



FERYL! OVER HERE-- I WANT YOU TO KNOCK OUT THAT BROKEN SUPPORT STRUT!

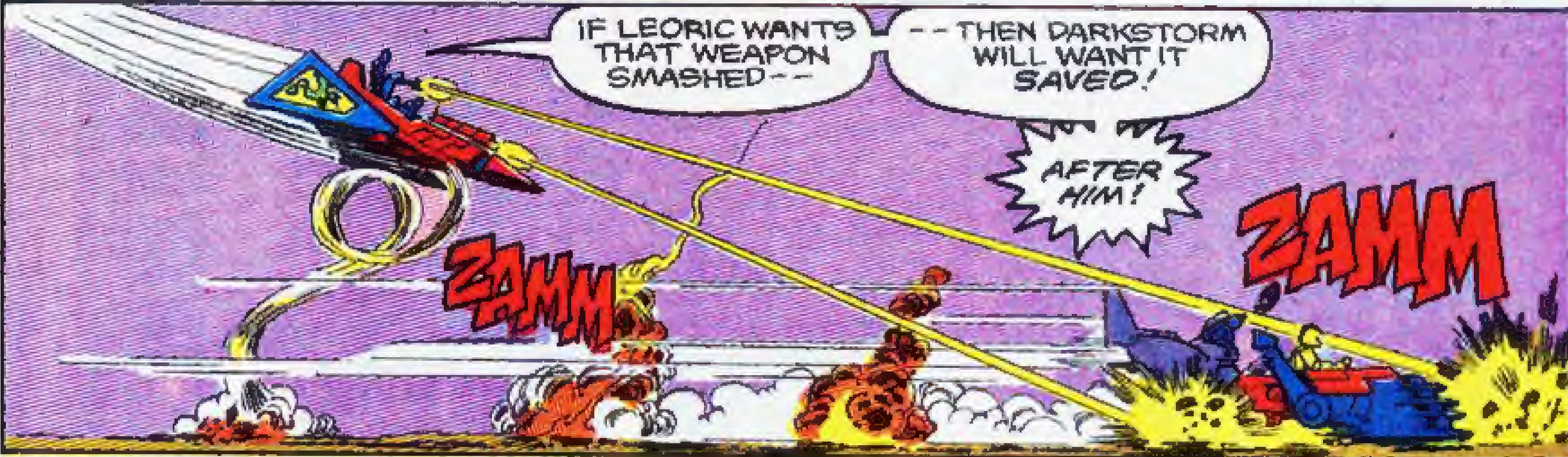
LET IT FALL! LET IT SMASH TO BITS! TRUST ME, BOY!

BUT THE BOMB--



VIRULINA, DID YOU HEAR THAT?

I'M NOT DEAF, FOOL!



IF LEORIC WANTS THAT WEAPON SMASHED--

-- THEN DARKSTORM WILL WANT IT SAVED!

AFTER HIM!

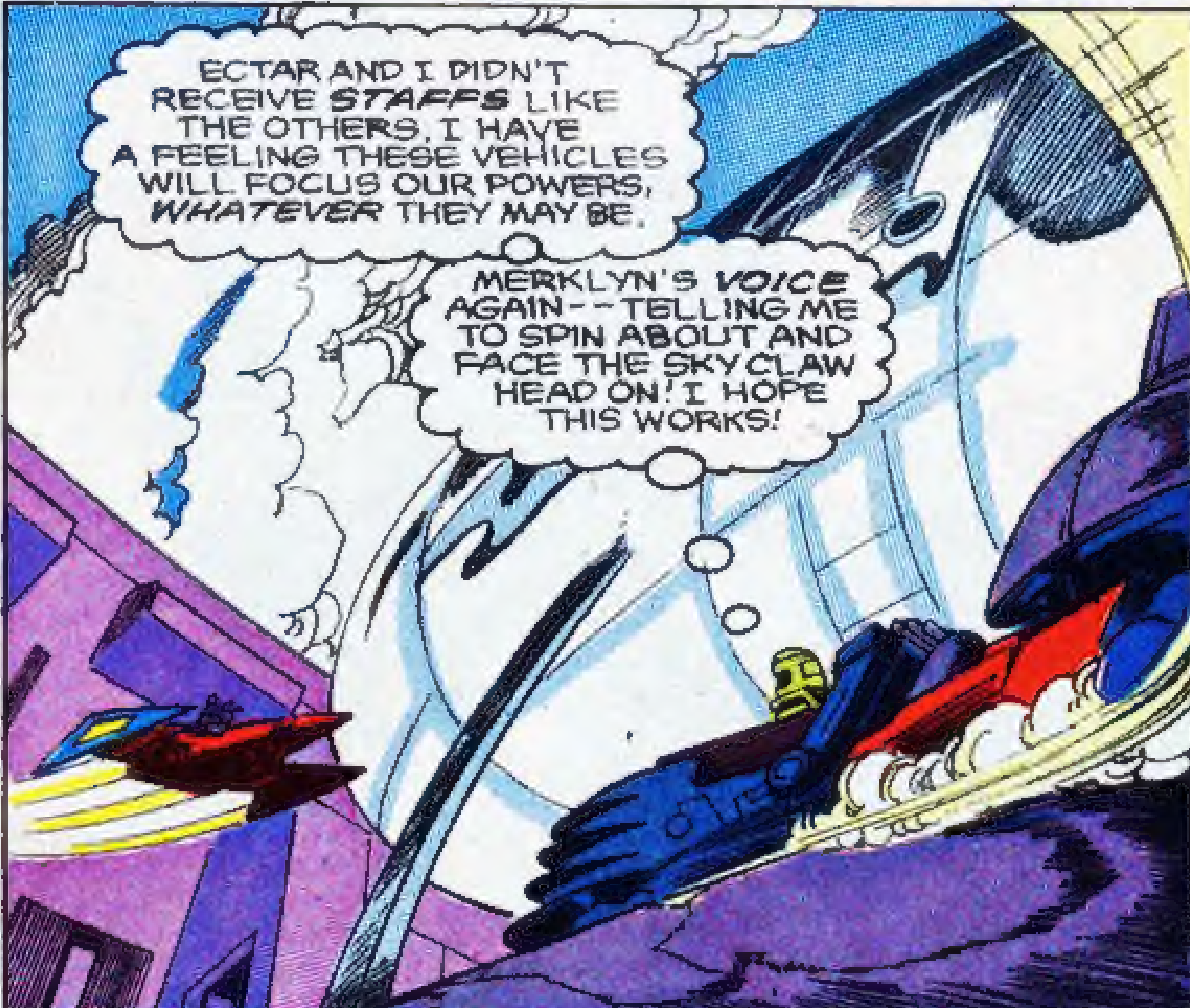
ZAMM

ZAMM



I FEEL A VOICE WHISPERING IN MY MIND, TELLING ME WHAT TO DO-- MERKLYN'S VOICE!

HE MUST HAVE MEANT ME TO FIND THIS VEHICLE-- THIS CAPTURE CHARIOT!



ECTAR AND I DIDN'T RECEIVE STAFFS LIKE THE OTHERS, I HAVE A FEELING THESE VEHICLES WILL FOCUS OUR POWERS, WHATEVER THEY MAY BE.

MERKLYN'S VOICE AGAIN-- TELLING ME TO SPIN ABOUT AND FACE THE SKYCLAW HEAD ON! I HOPE THIS WORKS!

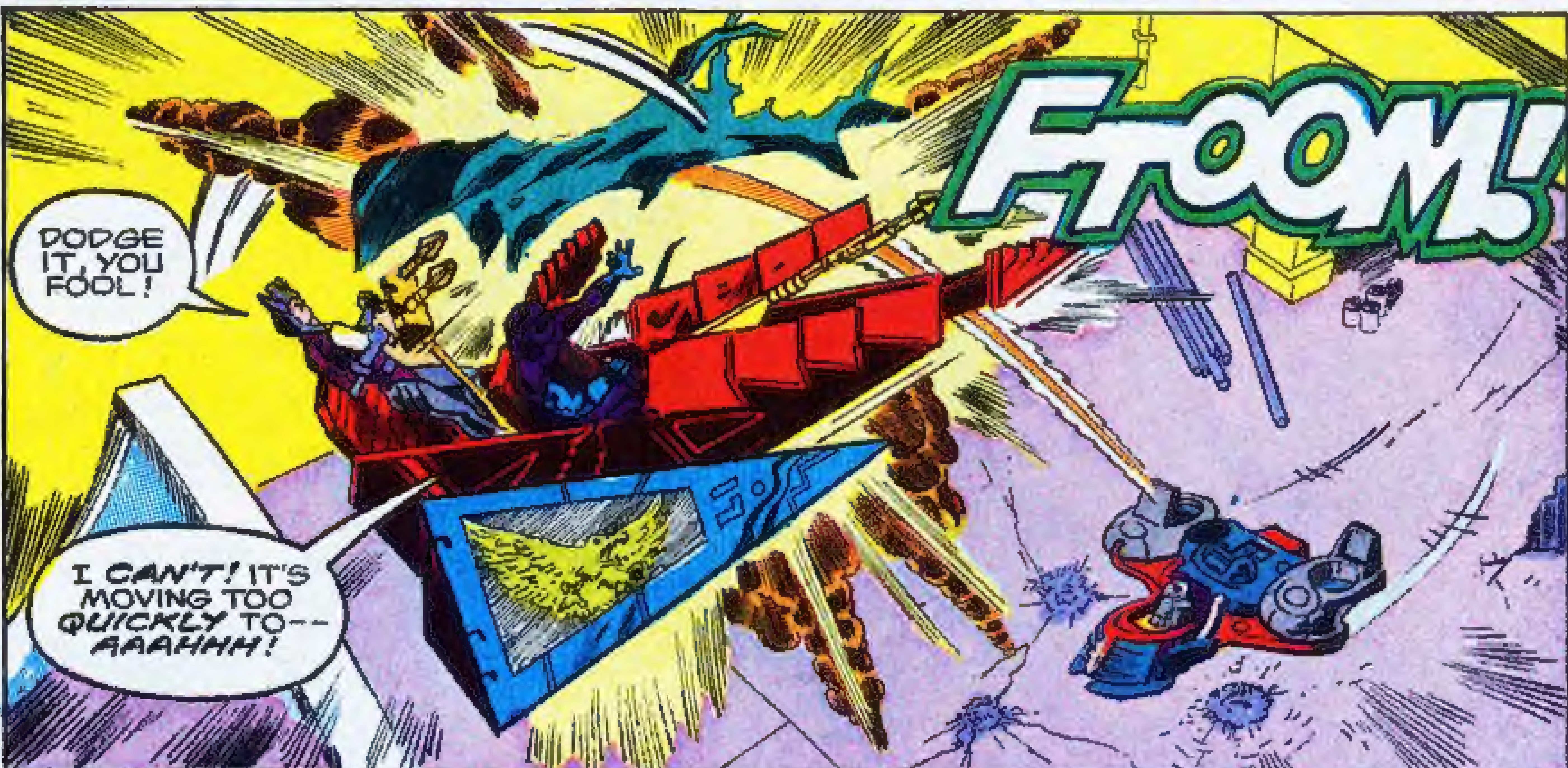
DEEP WITHIN THE CAPTURE CHARIOT, MYSTIC FORCES CHURN LIKE A BREWING STORM, TAKING SHAPE AND FORM...

MORTDRED, WHAT IS IT? WHAT'S HAPPENING?

...BUILDING IN STRENGTH UNTIL THEIR POWER CAN NO LONGER BE CONTAINED!

IT'S SOME SORT OF MAGICAL FIST, VIRULINA-- PULLING ENERGY OUT OF THIN AIR!

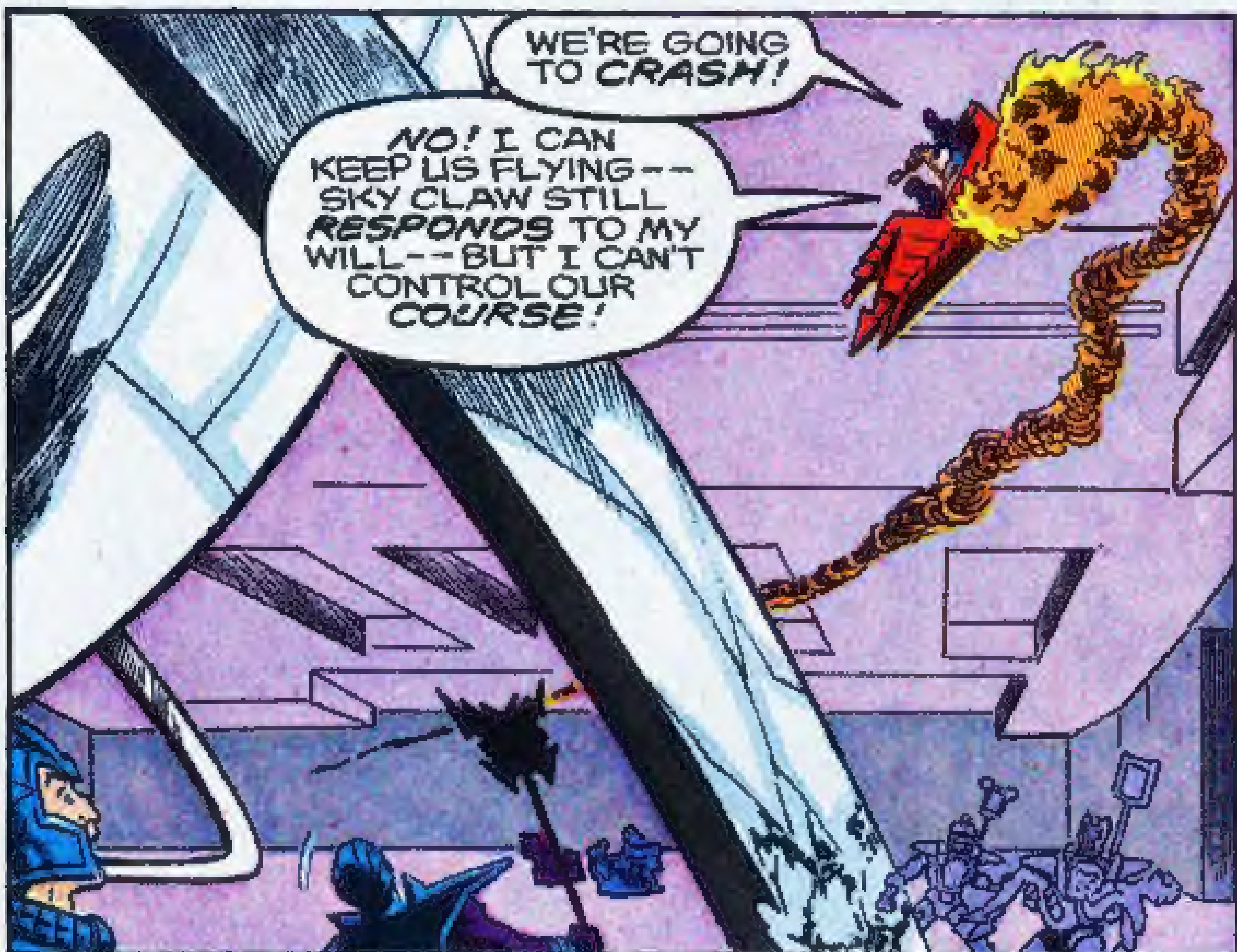
SHRWOOM!



DODGE IT, YOU FOOL!

I CAN'T! IT'S MOVING TOO QUICKLY TO-- AAAHHH!

Froom!



WE'RE GOING TO CRASH!

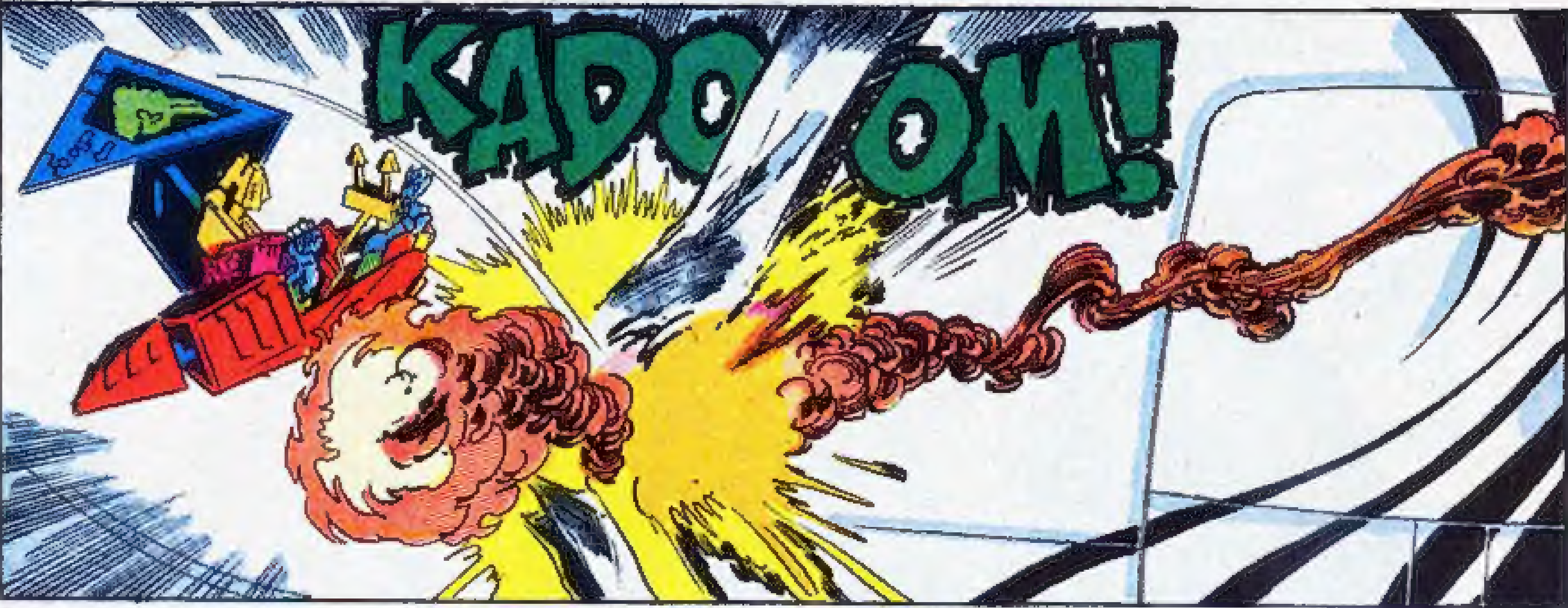
NO! I CAN KEEP US FLYING-- SKY CLAW STILL RESPONDS TO MY WILL-- BUT I CAN'T CONTROL OUR COURSE!



MOONS OF PRYSMOS, NO!

MORTDRED, DID YOU SEE WHERE WE'RE HEADED? IF WE SURVIVE THIS, I SWEAR I'LL KILL YOU!

ULP.



THOSE IMBECILES--
WHAT HAVE
THEY DONE?

THAT SUPPORT
STRUT WAS ALREADY
WEAKENED BEFORE
THEY SLAMMED
INTO IT--NOW IT'S
COLLAPSING!

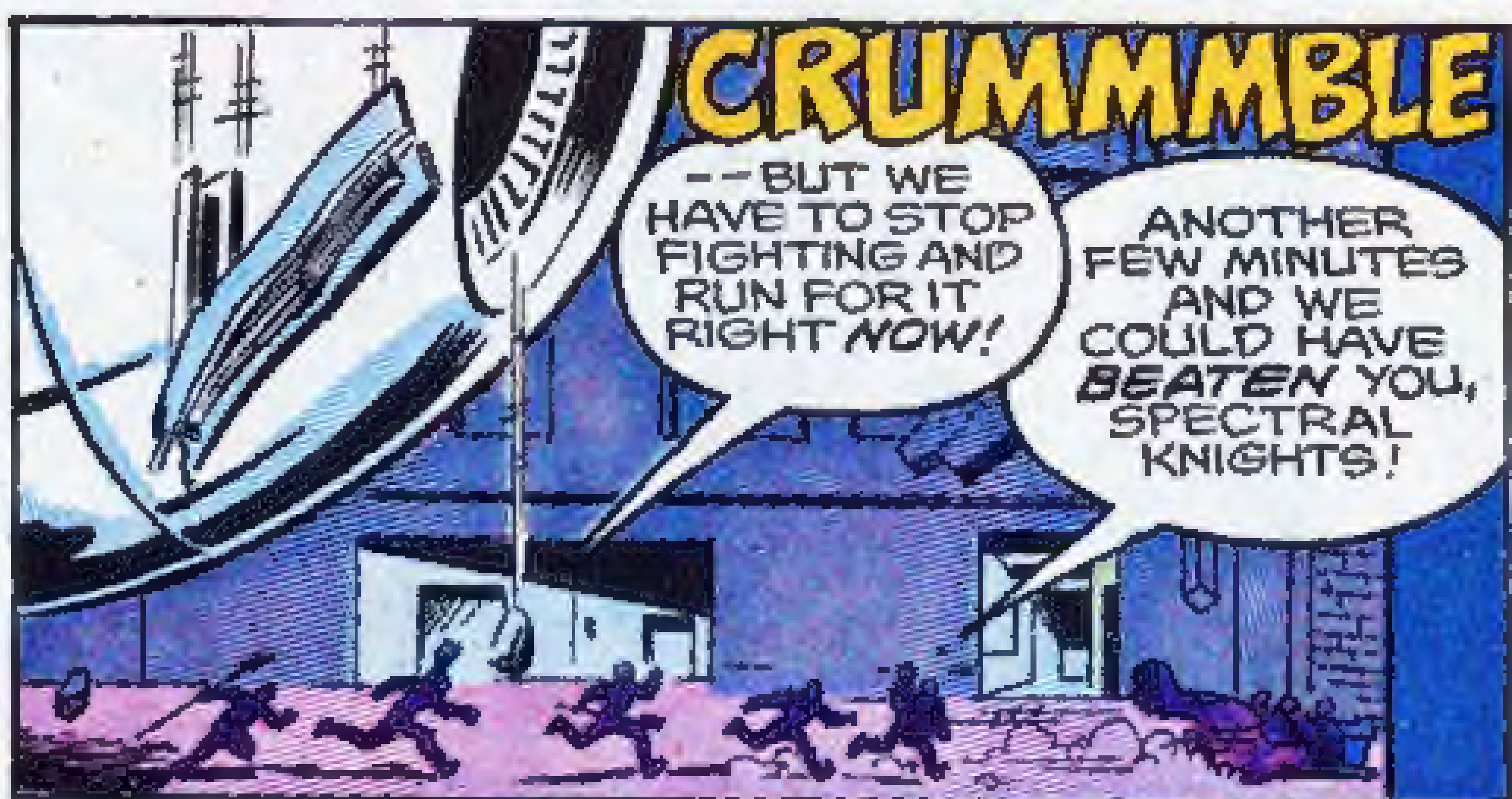
BUT--IF
THE BOMB
FALLS--



DON'T WORRY,
DARKSTORM, THE
BOMB WON'T
EXPLODE--BUT
THE CRASH WILL
BRING THE WHOLE
MOUND DOWN
AROUND OUR
EARS!

WE'LL BE
BURIED
ALIVE!

MY STAFF TELLS
ME THERE'S ONE
WAY OUT--



CRUMMMBLE

--BUT WE
HAVE TO STOP
FIGHTING AND
RUN FOR IT
RIGHT NOW!

ANOTHER
FEW MINUTES
AND WE
COULD HAVE
BEATEN YOU,
SPECTRAL
KNIGHTS!



KARASH!



WE BARELY ESCAPED, MORTDRED--
NO THANKS TO YOU!

NOR YOU,
VIRULINA!

BWHOOOM!

WHATEVER **SECRET** WAS HIDING WITHIN THAT MOUND, IT'S LOST TO US NOW AND FOREVER.

YOU'LL HAVE MUCH TO **ANSWER** FOR WHEN WE RETURN TO DARKSTORM'S DOMAIN, FOOL.

TELL ME, VIRULINA-- WOULD YOU LIKE TO GET OFF **HERE**?

IT'S DONE AND FINISHED. THE FATE OF PRYSMOS IS IN **DESTINY'S** HANDS ONCE MORE.

OH, **REALLY?** THOSE ARE THE SENTIMENTS OF A **MORAL COWARD**, LEORIC.

IF THAT BOMB COULD DO WHAT I BELIEVE IT COULD, THINK OF THE **POWER** IT WOULD HAVE GIVEN US.

SUCH POWER IS TOO **GREAT** FOR MERE MEN TO WIELD, DARKSTORM.

I WOULD HAVE USED IT TO **HEAL**, YOU TO **RULE**--AND WE BOTH WOULD HAVE TOLD OURSELVES WE WERE ACTING IN THE **RIGHT**!

BUT ON SUCH A **SCALE** OF POWER, CONCEPTS OF RIGHT AND WRONG NO LONGER MATTER.

WHAT **NONSENSE!**

YOU'RE A WEAKLING, LEORIC. ULTIMATELY, YOUR WEAKNESS WILL DESTROY YOU, AND THEN NO ONE WILL OPPOSE MY WILL, AND I WILL BE **SUPREME**.

With THAT, THE DARKLING LORDS LEAVE...

...AND FOR LONG MOMENTS, THE SPECTRAL KNIGHTS STAND IN THOUGHTFUL SILENCE, UNTIL...

YOUR THOUGHTS, ARZON?

I BELIEVE NOW YOU WERE WISE TO DESTROY THE **REVERSAL BOMB**, LEORIC.

WHATEVER THE MOTIVE FOR THEIR MAKING...

...SOME WEAPONS ARE TOO TERRIBLE TO USE.

THE END